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The Nation.

April 19, 1986 $1.25; U.K. 65p

EDITORIAL

THE TIES THAT BIND

There is a cord that connects the defense of the Spanish revolution against Franco's fascists with the defense of the Nicaraguan revolution, fifty years later, against Reagan's *contras*. It is held by a single spirit of struggle, the liberating exercise of resistance against the dominating fist of repression, and it was alive last week when one hundred veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade and hundreds of their friends met for a reunion at Lincoln Center in New York City. In a specific sense, they were remembering a lost cause: Spain fell to the Falange, the International Brigadistas were slaughtered and little was left after the epic sieges but sad stories and brave battle songs on scratchy phonograph records.

History has a way of making a different kind of sense, though. The Lincoln Brigade veterans kept their promise to continue the fight against the enemies of freedom: in Europe in World War II, in the South during the civil rights campaigns, and in the streets against the war in Vietnam. Now they have another fight on their hands, and there is another Lincoln Brigade—of village construction workers—in Nicaragua, organized by Abe Osheroff, a veteran of the Spanish Civil War.

It is not always easy to heed history's lessons. The veterans of the C.I.A.-sponsored invasion of Cuba (see page 550) have learned nothing except the necessity of air cover for beachhead landings. The fault, they believe, lay not in their cause but in President Kennedy's failure to back it with full U.S. military might. But as Walter LaFeber notes, one counterrevolution led to another and then another; from the Bay of Pigs to Vietnam and now to Central America. Only the persistence of memory holds hope that the good fight can again be fought and that the next cause will not be lost.

SOMOCISTAS OF THE RIGHT
Christopher Hitchens

AQUINO'S ECONOMIC CHALLENGE
Peter Tarr

THE SHAME OF NEW YORK
Bernard D. Nossiter

SPRING POETRY

LOVE IN THE LAUNDRETTE
Andrew Kopkind

RUST DOTH NOT CORRUPT
Arthur C. Danto

THE UNLEARNED LESSONS

LEST WE FORGET THE BAY OF PIGS

On the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Bay of Pigs invasion we asked an unreconstructed supporter of the operation, Harold Feeney, a retired U.S. Navy commander who worked with the veterans while serving in the Cuba Branch of the Defense Intelligence Agency in 1962, to find out what his former associates think about it today. For the historical lessons of the invasion, we turned to Walter LaFeber, a Nation *contributor and a longtime student of U.S. intervention in Central America.*
—The Editors

WALTER LAFEBER

President Kennedy's attempt to destroy Fidel Castro's regime at the Bay of Pigs has rightly been called the perfect failure. But the debacle of April 17, 1961, went far beyond Cuba. It helped lure the United States down a violent dead-end street in pursuit of revolutionaries throughout Latin America. It resulted in the first Soviet presence in the hemisphere. It rapidly accelerated Washington's disastrous policies in Vietnam. It caused nations throughout the world to question U.S. judgment and dependability. Twenty-five years later Washington officials still do not understand the reasons for this failure and seem bent on repeating it.

Certainly no place appeared more vulnerable to U.S. power than Cuba. The United States had controlled the island since 1898. Its ambassador was Cuba's second-most-powerful official, after the president, and at times the most powerful. Fidel Castro changed all that with his victory over dictator Fulgencio Batista on New Year's Day, 1959. During the rest of that year, his

(*Continued on Page 549*)

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LETTERS.

PHILIPPINE PEOPLE POWER

New York City

I hope the March 8 editorial "Reagan's Coups" will not be *The Nation*'s last word on the change of government in the Philippines. To my mind, it overlooked the most historic element in the recent events there: namely, the successful use of nonviolent power to confront and diffuse military power.

To claim that it was Washington that ran the show and determined its outcome does an injustice to the hundreds of thousands of individuals who made a personal decision to risk life and future to confront Marcos's military forces peacefully. To view what happened and is happening in the Philippines only from the perspective of power politics is to miss seeing that, along with power politics, the use of nonviolent power, while unusual and awesome, is a definite reality in the Philippines, worthy of attention and support.

Are there lessons in the Philippines to be learned and shared elsewhere in the world where the will of the people is subverted, blocked or suppressed by power politics? The currency of power politics is certainly the coin of the realms that be, but some other currency may be necessary for the realms that will be in the nuclear age. If the Philippine people are exploring a new currency of power, God bless them! And we should bless them, too, before so quickly disparaging their struggle as simply part of power politics as usual. *John Darr*

BAD JOKE

New York City

Couldn't Kai Bird and Max Holland have made their point about Reagan officials and Jean-Claude Duvalier without resorting to a hoary anti-Semitic "joke" about Rabinowitz and Rappaport as arsonists ["Capitol Letter," March 1]? And couldn't the editors of *The Nation* have been more vigilant and sensitive about such stereotypical ethnic "humor"?

Since *The Nation* just celebrated its 120th anniversary (we sent in a check for our salute in the anniversary issue, so I write as a friend and admirer), the editors might be interested to know that in 1867, when there was an attempt to stop the sale of fire insurance to Jews, *The Nation*—in an article dated May 23—was one of the publications that supported this anti-Semitic position!

This forgotten page in American history is instructive. Because insurance companies after the Civil War were having financial problems, they instructed their agents not to insure Jews, or to insure them only under circumstances that did not apply to other clients. (It should be remembered that the total Jewish population in the United States at that time was between 150,000 and 200,000.) The Hartford Fire Insurance Company, the Manhattan Fire Insurance Company and several others were involved in this. Protest meetings and boycotts were organized in Cincinnati, Indianapolis, St. Louis, Louisville, Chicago, Memphis, Cleveland, New Haven, Philadelphia and several other cities. Discussion raged in the mainstream press. Lined up against Jews, along with *The Nation*, were the *Wall Street Underwriter*, *The Insurance Monitor and Wall Street Review*, the *Baltimore Underwriter*, the New York *Herald* and the *Cincinnati Commercial*. *The Baltimore Telegram*, the New York *Handels Zeitung*, the *New York Tribune*, the *Petersburg Daily Examiner* in Virginia, the Nashville *Press and Times*, the New York *Round Table*, the Philadelphia *Evening Telegraph* and the *Banking and Insurance Chronicle of Chicago* opposed the insurance companies' anti-Semitic policy. In 1867, *The Nation* was in its infancy, and I am not suggesting that the editors today should be held responsible for the magazine's position back then. But for this stereotype of the Jew-as-arsonist to turn up in 1986—why, if I didn't know better, I'd be tempted to believe that anti-Semitism is ineradicable.

Morris U. Schappes
Editor, Jewish Currents

CRIMSON CALLING

Washington

The March 1 editorial "Harvard Co-opts" well described that university's pusillanimity on the South Africa question. Fortunately, the opportunity is at hand to put some backbone in Harvard's governing structure. Alumni Against Apartheid has, by petition, placed a slate of three candidates on the ballot for the university's governing Board of Overseers: Kenneth Simmons (1954), a U.C., Berkeley, architecture professor; John Plotz (1969), a lawyer with the San Francisco Public Defender's Office; and Gay Seidman (1978), a U.C., Berkeley, doctoral candidate and *The Harvard Crimson*'s first woman president. They are committed to total divestment of the $400 million that Harvard now has invested in corporations doing business in South Africa.

Graduates of Harvard and Radcliffe colleges and all their graduate schools will be receiving ballots early this month. Normally only 20 percent of those eligible vote. A big turnout and victory for the slate would turn Harvard's policies around and have an important domino effect on other institutions.

Nation readers who are or know Harvard graduates should be sure to vote for the Alumni Against Apartheid slate, and get word of the election to any potential voters. It's a real opportunity to advance freedom in South Africa. (More information is available from A.A.A. at 3027 Regent Street, Berkeley, CA 94705.) *Chester W. Hartman*

FACES OF THE GOLEM

Princeton, N.J.

E.L. Doctorow's image of the bomb as a great golem consuming our lives embodies well the Promethean horror of our present condition ["The State of Mind of the Union," March 22]. A society that teaches its children to objectify and dehumanize their highest values of love and individualism, and put their hope in Cabbage Patch dolls, finds its fullest expression in the bomb. The face of the golem looks out of our store windows and our television sets just as surely as it sits in missile silos and stalks the enemy in submarines.

As the pace of life accelerates out of our control, future lives, our own and our children's, lose their meaning for us. Our deepest instincts have been formed to show us that there is only one way off the fast track: weapons of self-annihilation are the apotheosis of our culture. Only a change in that culture will tame the golem we have become. *Marc Wortman*

AUTHOR'S QUERY

I am writing a commissioned biography of Jethro Kloss, health reformer, natural-foods expert and author of the classic book of herbalism, *Back to Eden*. I would appreciate hearing from anyone who has access to correspondence or materials bearing on Kloss. Calls may be made collect.

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CORRECTION

The editors regret the following errors in Jon Wiener's April 5 article. The Minnesota *Daily* did not publish A.I.A.'s story about Terry Anderson; after checking with Anderson it ran an Op-Ed piece attacking A.I.A. Also, German President Paul von Hindenburg's name was misspelled.

Because of a mechanical error, two sentences in Uri Avnery and Hanna Siniora's article in the same issue were garbled. The sentences (page 489) should have read: "It would save face all around. The P.L.O.'s endorsement of 242 and 338 would be indirect and not carry the onus of surrender."

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EDITORIALS.

Deporting Dissent

The Reagan Administration's war against Nicaragua, and its military interventions in the rest of Central America, from Guatemala to Panama, have a domestic correlative in the campaign to criminalize dissent and repress solidarity in the growing "antiwar movement" of the 1980s. As we go to press, the trial of eleven religious workers who helped Central American refugees find sanctuary in the United States is in its final days in Tucson, Arizona. The petition of Margaret Randall, a U.S.-born writer and professor, to reverse a deportation order and remain in the United States, is pending before an Immigration and Naturalization Service judge in El Paso. Throughout the country I.N.S. agents are rounding up refugees and shipping them to the huge new immigration prison in Oakdale, Louisiana, the biggest *corralón* for aliens in the country. There have been "black bag" break-ins and surveillance of sanctuary and solidarity offices in several cities, and U.S. scholars and journalists returning from Nicaragua almost routinely have their papers, notes and recordings snatched by officials at airports [see Frank Donner, "Travelers' Warning for Nicaragua," *The Nation,* July 6/13, 1985, and Alfie Kohn, "The Return of Cointelpro?" *The Nation,* January 25].

Lawyers, defendants, witnesses and supporters of the refugees report that an atmosphere of political repression as virulent and menacing as the McCarthyism of the 1950s hangs over the border regions where activity has been

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heaviest. The I.N.S. has become a kind of political police, enforcing ideological behavior with more determination than it ever showed in preventing illegal immigration. During Randall's hearing I.N.S. lawyers cross-examined her for four days about her opinions on Vietnam, Nicaragua, Cuba, Mexico, communism, Marxism, socialism and contraception. They grilled her about writing a poem titled "Che"; about letting an advertisement for a book by Karl Marx appear in a Mexican literary magazine she published; about being an admitted atheist; about dedicating an issue of her magazine to Huey Newton; about working as a waitress in a gay bar and posing in the nude as an artist's model twenty-five or thirty years ago; and about failing to express a commitment to the "good order and happiness of the United States." Randall took out Mexican citizenship in 1966. Now she has resumed her life in Albuquerque, New Mexico, where she was born, and wants to renew her U.S. citizenship or at least be allowed a green card so that she can continue teaching at the University of New Mexico. But the government wants her out, presumably because her unrepentant dissent from official policy is contagious to otherwise obedient citizens.

The six-month sanctuary trial has been marked by the most bitter ideological arguments heard in a U.S. courtroom since the tumultuous proceedings of the late 1960s. Lawyers for the clergy and lay activists have likened the defendants to Abolitionists who gave refuge to runaway slaves along the Underground Railroad before the Civil War, and to Christians who aided Jews in escaping the Gestapo. The prosecution sees the accused as racketeers and subversives engaged in a conspiracy to smuggle aliens who want to enter the country only for the well-known economic benefits of life in the Hispanic barrios of the Southwest.

Whatever the verdict in the case, the trial may have already had an effect exactly opposite to the Administration's intentions. The sanctuary project and the larger religious movement that developed it gained legitimacy and support as the trial dragged on. Last month, Governor Toney Anaya formally declared New Mexico a "state of sanctuary," joining many communities, including Los Angeles and Sacramento, that have made similar commitments. "It's my hope," Anaya said, "that we can start a snowball effect and bring moral and political pressure to bear on leaders across the country" so that they will join the movement and defend those who are fleeing Reagan's wars.

The 'New' Haiti

The sound of the Reagan Doctrine Part II is ringing in Haitian ears, and it evokes memories of the island's occupation by U.S. Marines from 1915 through 1934. Worried about the prolonged popular protests in Port-au-Prince and the provincial cities, the Administration sent Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Elliott Abrams to the capital. On April 3, Abrams announced that the United States will help the Haitian junta upgrade its internal security forces.

After Jean-Claude Duvalier fled the island on a U.S. Air Force jet on February 7, a military junta was installed with Washington's blessing. Following their liberation, the Haitian people took to the streets in a bloody campaign against Duvalier's hated police force, the Tontons Macoute. Thus preoccupied, they took a few days to notice that the junta was composed almost entirely of former Duvalier satraps.

The *New York Times* story reporting Abrams's remarks noted, "Both the Haitian military and police forces . . . will begin a recruiting program this month to fill the vacuum left by the Duvalier militia known as the Tontons Macoute . . . [which] was widely believed to have been the vital instrument for maintaining stability." That vacuum is not one the majority of Haitians abhor, but it is one that the Reagan Administration fears. Stability, not democracy, is what Reagan II is all about. The State Department's painless Haitian coup is now being threatened by the people it was intended to placate. Since the day they realized who was in the junta, Haitians have been opposing it. Not satisfied with a few cosmetic changes at the top—leaving Gen. Henry Namphy, the former commander of Duvalier's army, in charge—they are clamoring for a civilian junta to rule until elections are held. But the present junta has so far failed to set a date for the promised elections.

Rather than pressuring it to do so, the State Department talks about sending military advisers and aid to shore it up. Abrams acknowledged that Haiti's urgent need is for food but called for guns as well: "If you want to maintain order in the country, then the military is going to have to modernize and professionalize, which it wishes to. Obviously a new, democratic Haiti will need a new, professional force to maintain order."

Obviously, any government, democratic or totalitarian, needs an armed force, and Haiti's present one is negligible—7,800 poorly equipped, poorly trained, poorly paid men, including an outmoded and inefficient fire department. But Haiti is not yet "new [and] democratic"; it is the same old Haiti, starving and powerless.

What is new is that completely disenfranchised people have seen the power they can wield simply by going on strike, organizing demonstrations and running fearlessly into the bullets fired by troops and the Tontons. The Haitians struck and protested for three months and dislodged a dictatorship that had been in power for nearly three decades. People who have overthrown an oppressor as malevolent as Duvalier are not likely soon to subside beneath the rule of another, albeit lesser, evil. The United States is ready to provide the new junta with the means to put down any serious popular eruptions. An easier way to end the chaos in the streets would be to hold popular elections. There is no dearth of declared presidential candidates who were opposed to Duvalier, including Gregoire Eugene, Sylvio Claude and Hubert de Ronceray. But Abrams made no mention of elections.

Haiti is not threatened by an outside power; the United States should not be arming the junta with weapons intended for use against Haitians. In the end, the island's stability depends on its people. And they are no longer docile.

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George Kirstein

When George Kirstein became publisher of *The Nation* in 1955, the ninety-year-old magazine had fallen on hard times. Kirstein, who had been executive vice president of the Health Insurance Plan of Greater New York and whose journalistic experience had been limited to a four-year stint as labor columnist for *Women's Wear Daily*, was the latest in a sturdy line of *Nation* publishers who saw the job as a trust and who fulfilled it.

The magazine's troubles were many. It was deeply in debt; printing and distribution costs were rising; sources of funding were drying up; and the stench of McCarthyism was still in the air. As Kirstein later wrote, "Many self-styled liberals believed that [*The Nation*'s] editorial policy paid insufficient obeisance to the cold war cult of 'anti-communism.'" The new publisher set to work and, as Carey McWilliams wrote in his memoirs, by the time Kirstein retired, ten years later, "the magazine had rounded out the first century of publication. . . . [It] was free of debt, its pulse beat was stronger than it had been at any time since the early 1940s, and it had won more than its usual share of journalism prizes and awards."

George Kirstein's commitment to *The Nation* ranged beyond the balance sheet, however. He had a deep understanding of the role of small, independent journals in American culture. In an article titled "The Myths of the Small Magazine," which appeared in the June 1963 issue of *The Progressive*, he punctured, in sometimes amusing fashion but with serious intent, the misconceptions about that role. One of them he characterized as follows: "If the small magazines were any good, they would make money." Rejecting this bottom-line criterion of worth, he wrote:

> Making money in our society has to do with achieving popular appeal. Excellence . . . has to do with the maintenance of a high level of cultural standards. In America, activities with primarily an intellectual or cultural appeal are not apt to achieve enough mass attraction to be profitable.

He retained his interest in the magazine to the end. Only days before he died, he called Hamilton Fish to express his regret that his health would not permit him to attend our 120th anniversary celebration. He was a friend of this magazine, a friend of liberal humanism and a friend of ours. We shall miss him.

Post-Iacocca

The long-awaited findings of a government investigation into allegations of mismanagement by Lee Iacocca's Statue of Liberty–Ellis Island Foundation will be released next week in Washington at an all-day hearing of the House Subcommittee on National Parks and Recreation. A report by the General Accounting Office, requested last June by subcommittee chair Bruce Vento, is expected to confirm many of the charges first made public last year in *The Nation* [see Gratz and Fettmann, "The Selling of Miss Liberty," November 9, and "The Battle for Ellis Island," November 30], which contributed to Iacocca's dismissal as chair of the government advisory commission. Ironically, the report comes as Iacocca's dominance over the restoration is on the wane.

The commission is finally starting to come to grips with the issue of the future of Ellis Island. Iacocca's egotistical assumption that the commission would simply rubber-stamp his "ethnic Williamsburg" concept will, we hope, be replaced by the genuine public-private cooperation envisioned by the Interior Department when it appointed the commission in 1982.

A shift in tone was immediately noticeable last month at the first meeting of the commission chaired by Iacocca's successor, Armen Avedisian, a retired Illinois construction executive. Avedisian encouraged input from both commission members and outside experts. In a recent interview with us, he made it clear he has no intention of simply following Iacocca's policies. "I operate too independently for that," he said.

Iacocca made ritual references to his parents' arrival at Ellis Island, but Avedisian's connection is more deeply felt. Like many Armenians, his family suffered terribly at the hands of the Turks after World War I. The story he told us of their escape to America was obviously vivid in his mind.

Avedisian said he hopes to have the plans for Ellis Island's restoration firmly in place by early next year. Explaining that he will not reveal his own architectural preferences lest they influence the commission members, he nevertheless indicated that he is not automatically opposed to proposals for partial demolition, asking of one 1930s structure, "What's so historic about that?" Still, he seems intent on carrying out the planning process the way it was intended. For the first time, the commission will have its own two-person staff, independent of the Statue of Liberty–Ellis Island Foundation, which Iacocca still heads. It will have separate offices at the Interior Department, which it is supposed to serve in an advisory capacity. More important, Avedisian said he intends to consult the commission's preservation, architectural and historical experts, whom Iacocca ignored and who blocked corporate architect John Burgee's plan that called for demolishing two-thirds of the buildings on the island.

Avedisian said, "The sooner all the controversy is forgotten, the better." Release of the G.A.O. report and a new airing of the details at the congressional hearing should insure that that won't happen. In fact, it will probably spark a new spate of angry Iacocca press conferences. Whether the project can move forward will be the test of Avedisian's leadership.

ROBERTA BRANDES GRATZ AND ERIC FETTMANN

Roberta Brandes Gratz, an expert on preservation issues, is completing a book on urban redevelopment. Eric Fettmann is assistant city editor for the New York Post.

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MINORITY REPORT.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

If there is one thing that unites the Reaganites and their sickly circle of liberal admirers in Washington, it is the allegation that Nicaragua is a "revolution betrayed." The phrase has an honorable pedigree, deriving from Trotsky's mordantly accurate dissection of the Stalinist regime in the Soviet Union. But as employed by the White House propaganda team, it is an important element in the manufacture of a false consensus. If the term means anything in President Reagan's mouth, it means that everybody welcomed the anti-Somoza revolution but that some of the more sensitive comrades have become sickened and distressed since 1979—sickened and distressed enough to start burning the crops, murdering the peasants and bombing the refineries of a wretchedly underdeveloped society (something the original Trotskyists were only *accused* of doing).

The record, like history, is pitiless. It shows what the right would have you forget: that Reagan and his advisers were always pro-Somoza and anti-Sandinista and that they started levying war on Nicaragua long before any of the incoming revolutionary tendencies had had a chance to establish or to differentiate themselves.

As a candidate in 1979, Ronald Reagan recorded numerous broadcasts for his political action committee Citizens for the Republic. Tapes and cassettes of these gems were distributed to radio stations across the luckless nation. Here is what the man emitted between March and April 1979:

> Senator Steve Symms of Idaho . . . made a nine-day trip, touching shore in Jamaica (our newest Marxist neighbor), the Dominican Republic and Cuba. His summation is blunt and to the point. He says the Caribbean is rapidly becoming a Communist lake in what should be an American pond. . . .
>
> I'm sure he would agree that the troubles in Nicaragua bear a Cuban label also. While there are people in that troubled land who probably have justifiable grievances against the Somoza regime, there is no question but that most of the rebels are Cuban-trained, Cuban-armed and dedicated to creating another Communist country in this hemisphere.

A little later in the same period, as Somoza's government was approaching its death agony and inflicting death agony on thousands of its own people, Reagan took to the airwaves again. His target was the softhearted State Department:

> Our State Department [has decided on] a cutback in economic aid to Nicaragua and the withdrawal of American personnel. This we are doing because, according to the State Department, President Somoza is in violation of our standards of human rights. He may be—I don't know.

So, right up until July 19, 1979, the date of the Sandinista revolution, there is no evidence that Reagan was anything but sympathetic to the deluded sadist Somoza, who bombed his own capital city before giving up. Nor was it long after the revolution that the American right began to rattle the saber. The 1980 Republican platform, which was written less than a year after the fall of Somoza, read:

> We deplore the Marxist Sandinista takeover of Nicaragua and the Marxist attempts to destabilize El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. We do not support United States assistance to any Marxist government in this hemisphere, and we oppose the Carter Administration aid program for the government of Nicaragua. However, we will support the efforts of the Nicaraguan people to establish a free and independent government.

Credit for the insertion of this plank in the platform is taken by John Carbaugh, a former senior foreign policy aide to Senator Jesse Helms and a man of such disordered reactionary temper that the Thatcher government had to ask him to leave the Zimbabwe independence talks in London, where, uninvited, he was urging Ian Smith to hang tough.

Even Carbaugh would have looked a little farouche at the May 1980 meeting of the Council for Inter-American Security in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The C.I.A.S. declaimed:

> Certainly, in war there is no substitute for victory; and the United States is engaged in World War III. The first two phases, containment and detente, have been overtaken by the Soviet scenario of double envelopment: surround the People's Republic of China and strangle the Western industrialized nations by interdicting their oil and ore. Southern Asia and Ibero-America are the actual areas of aggression.
>
> Latin America is vital to the United States: America's global power projection has always rested upon a cooperative Caribbean and a supportive South America. For the United States of America, isolationism is impossible. Containment of the Soviet Union is not enough. Detente is dead.
>
> Only the United States can, as a partner, protect the independent nations of Latin America from Communist conquest and help preserve Hispanic-American culture from sterilization by international Marxist materialism.

It was from among the authors of this swirling bullshit that candidate Reagan picked his advisers on the Panama Canal and Nicaragua. Roger Fontaine briefed him on the canal, became a special Central America adviser to the National Security Council and now works for the Moonies at *The Washington Times*. Lewis Tambs is U.S. Ambassador to Costa Rica. L. Francis Bouchey, one of Roberto d'Aubuisson's hosts when he visited the United States in 1984, also has continual "input," as they say.

The rest is history. In March 1981 the Reaganites suspended Nicaraguan credits for the purchase of wheat. In April of the same year they canceled the $15 million in aid that remained of President Carter's original $75 million program. In September the $7 million A.I.D. loan was suspended, and in November the National Security Council met to approve an eight-point plan that included the initial $19 million for the *contras*.

And yet we are asked to believe that the right has been driven by Sandinista excesses to support the Somocistas. If it had been up to the Reaganites, Somoza would never have been overthrown. Not since the days of the China lobby has an important foreign policy been so firmly in the hands of a fanatical clique—an *ancien régime* cabal of misfits and loony tunes.

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ARTICLES.

THE ECONOMIC CHALLENGE

Can Aquino Revive A Plundered Land?

PETER TARR

As the new government of the Philippines gets down to business, it is instructive to bear in mind a remark made in 1981 by Senator Benigno Aquino, daydreaming about the post-Marcos future. "People [will] expect . . . miracles," he predicted. "[They] will say, 'Jesus Christ, you're the guy we waited eight years for? You're even worse!' The first guy that will come in will be blown out in six months. Then a second guy will come in, and he'll be blown out in six months."

Now it's up to that "first guy"—Aquino's widow, Corazon—to prove him wrong. So far she has done little to lower the people's expectations. Since assuming the presidency in late February, Aquino has repeatedly declared that her first priority is to address the nation's most vexing social and economic problems: deepening poverty, widening income disparities, a lack of new economic opportunities, a grossly unfair system of land tenure and massive unemployment and underemployment.

This approach is necessary, Aquino has maintained, if her government is to meet its most formidable political challenge—that from the left, which manifests itself in the insurgency led by the New People's Army (N.P.A.), the military wing of the Philippine Communist Party, and in burgeoning nationalist groups such as the the National Democratic Front, a Communist-led grass-roots organization. In the waning days of the Marcos regime the N.D.F. could credibly claim the sympathies of some 10 million Filipinos, almost one-fifth of the population.

Aquino is staking her presidency on the gamble that a sweeping reorganization of the nation's economy will, in the not-too-distant future, produce benefits that can be shared by people in every stratum of Philippine society, especially by the mass of rural poor. It is her version of counterinsurgency: the armed struggle will continue, Aquino suggests, until legitimate economic and social grievances of nationalists and Communists have been met.

But it is not yet clear whether members of the new ruling coalition will subscribe to that view. Nor is it clear whether Aquino can hold the coalition together, diverse as it is; priests and soldiers, entrepreneurs and farmers, populists and party hacks, find themselves in often uncomfortably close quarters.

Peter Tarr is a freelance writer specializing in East Asian affairs. He researched this article in January and February, while covering the Philippine presidential election.

There is a refreshing air of the unpredictable about Aquino, which foreign creditors, Ronald Reagan and, indeed, some Filipinos, find unsettling. So far, she has demonstrated a penchant for speaking candidly and for following the dictates of her conscience. Those tendencies may well be her saving grace, for in the months ahead Aquino will be under considerable pressure from "pragmatists"—the bankers and industrialists in her inner circle—to concentrate on the problems of business before addressing the needs of the poor. So now the question is, Can she do both at once?

The new government's leading pragmatist is Finance Minister Jaime Ongpin. He is an enthusiastic free marketer with an M.B.A. from Harvard University, and until recently presided over one of the nation's leading mining firms, Benguet Corporation. After Benigno Aquino's assassination, in 1983, Ongpin and José Concepcion Jr., owner of a large food-processing firm and now Aquino's Minister of Trade and Industry, joined forces with other members of the nation's increasingly disenchanted business elite under the banner of the Makati Business Club. Having been stung by economic policies that favored a handful of Marcos cronies, the club's members were among the leaders of the movement to oust the dictator. Ongpin in particular took risks. At the time his company was controlled by the Marcos family, yet he became the chief strategist of Aquino's presidential campaign. Concepcion devoted his energies to mobilizing the citizens' watchdog group, NAMFREL, which played a vital role in documenting Marcos's attempt to steal the February election.

A third pragmatist in Aquino's circle was not among Marcos's opponents. José Fernandez, a prominent Manila banker, was governor of the Central Bank under Marcos, and he remains in that post. His inclusion in the new government, at the insistence of Ongpin, was a clear indication of Ongpin's conservative leanings. Fernandez has a close working relationship with foreign financiers and officials of the International Monetary Fund, with whom he negotiated during Marcos's final two years and whose favor must now be curried, in the pragmatists' view, to speed economic recovery. Fernandez successfully implemented strict monetary policies prescribed by the I.M.F., which reduced monthly inflation rates from 64 percent to 10 percent by the end of last year. At the same time, however, those policies virtually choked off economic activity, causing a deep depression which has devastated the nation's middle and lower classes.

To the extent that Ongpin, Concepcion and Fernandez are closely identified with elite business interests their priorities will be suspect, particularly among leftists and nationalists, who worry that their commitment to social welfare is only skin-deep. Certainly there is evidence to support that view. In a position paper drafted for Aquino in January, Ongpin indicated a desire to reduce drastically the role of government in the economy. That, he said, is the only way to stimulate economic activity after a decade of

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massive and stifling government intervention, engineered by Marcos for his and his cronies' benefit. In a recent interview he said plainly, "I'm for letting the private sector loose." The Philippine left is troubled by Ongpin's apparent faith in the ability of business to regulate itself. His vision of recovery, it seems, is a Philippine adaptation of Reaganomics: the private sector will energize the economy with new investment, earn profits and pay taxes. Until prosperity returns, at which time government spending for social programs could be increased, benefits will simply trickle down. And, by all accounts, recovery will be painfully slow: even if the economy grows at an annual rate of 4 percent (and it has contracted nearly 10 percent since 1983), it will take four years to restore per capita income to its 1983 level of $649.

Many in Aquino's inner circle are wary of trickle-down and will press her to pursue the social programs she says are so important. Among those individuals are two distinguished legislators, former senators José Diokno and Lorenzo Tañada. Diokno, who was jailed by Marcos during the martial law period, heads the newly formed Commission on Human Rights; Tañada, still a dedicated anti-imperialist at 86, heads the Commission on National Reconciliation, established to forge links with the left and negotiate with the N.P.A. Both are economic nationalists and for decades have criticized the granting of concessions to foreigners at the expense of Philippine entrepreneurs. Aquino also benefits from the counsel of widely respected human rights attorneys Joker Arroyo and Jovito Salonga. Salonga, another former senator, heads a commission charged with recovering Marcos's ill-gotten wealth. Two other advisers, neither of whom holds a government job, firmly support Aquino's commitment to social justice. They are clerics Jaime Cardinal Sin, the savvy leader of 45 million Philippine Catholics, and the Rev. Joaquin Bernas, a scholar and president of the elite Jesuit university, Ateneo de Manila. They possess powers of moral persuasion that Aquino will use to hold her fractious ruling coalition together.

If the economic ministers are Aquino's pragmatists, the nationalists and humanists are her idealists—the conscience of the new government. For the next six to twelve months, while Aquino rules with near-absolute authority derived from a euphemistically dubbed "freedom constitution," they will play a crucial role. So will members of several major "cause-oriented" populist and nationalist groups. The most important, by far, is the N.D.F., which has already criticized the appointment of what it calls elitists to key Cabinet positions. Others, with a less radical following, include Kaakbay (formally known as the Movement for Philippine Sovereignty and Democracy, and led by Diokno), ATOM (the August Twenty-One Movement, founded by Benigno Aquino's brother Butz) and the Bayan (New Patriotic Alliance) and Bandila coalitions.

"We nationalists are addressing the problems of poverty, of being tied up to the world economy," Diokno explained in an interview. "We are troubled by the unequal distribution of power and income. And we perceive the need of Filipinos to solve their own problems." He and other nationalists and populists, both in and out of Aquino's government, insist that the needs of the poor are preeminent. "We must now use our freedom to improve the standard of living of the average Filipino," Diokno said. "We want to improve everyone's standard of living. But we have to start with those who have least in life."

Economic conditions have worsened dramatically for nearly all Filipinos in the tailspin that began after Benigno Aquino's murder. Since that time, about 600,000 people have lost their jobs, according to the Center for Research and Communication (C.R.C.), a widely respected Manila think tank which compiles economic statistics. Fifteen to 20 percent of the work force of 21 million is unemployed, and an additional 40 percent work less than half the time. "But the most telling figure," notes the C.R.C.'s senior vice president, Bernardo Villegas, "is that 70 percent of the people are now below the poverty line [$125 per family, per month]; when Marcos took over, in 1965, only 28 percent were below the line." Since 1983 real wages have plunged 40 percent, owing to high inflation and a steadily depreciating peso, which has lost 90 percent of its 1983 value relative to the dollar. During the same period the cost of a typical market basket of consumer goods, mostly food, increased 85 percent in real terms.

Just about everyone in the Philippines today feels the impact. Among the most seriously affected are the estimated 200,000 squatters living in the flimsy, roofless shacks of Bacolod, the urban heart of the once-prosperous sugar island of Negros. Since the start of the sugar industry's decline in the late 1970s, more than a quarter-million laborers, or roughly half the island's work force, have lost their jobs. The government estimates that 37,000 children—maybe 80 percent of them in the city—are suffering from second- and third-degree malnutrition. Yet the Bacolod hospital's malnutrition ward has only fourteen beds.

Fifty miles west across the Visayan Sea, on the island of Panay, the principal cash crop is rice. Many of the cultivators are deeply in debt, as are many smallholders, tenants and sharecroppers throughout the archipelago. Fertilizer and pesticide prices are high, irrigation is often inadequate, and crop yields, while having risen dramatically in the wake of the Green Revolution, are still too low to produce surpluses. Few have benefited from Marcos's cosmetic land-reform program.

In Metro Manila, on the island of Luzon, 300 miles north of Panay, 5 million urban poor are no better off than the squatters of Bacolod: most are jobless, and a growing number are malnourished. On the broad avenues of Makati, the capital's fashionable financial district, there is an astounding proliferation of prostitution. Many young girls are walking the streets to earn money for families that were considered solidly middle class only two or three years ago.

With the Philippine economy in ruins, it is likely in the months ahead that the pragmatists, not the idealists, will have the President's ear. They are preoccupied with the $27.5 billion foreign debt, interest payments on which consume 40 percent of export earnings. In effect, the country has no reserves. For more than two years it has had to de-

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pend on standby loans and emergency credits to finance the import of raw materials and make interest payments. With investment at a standstill, the economy, as one Western banker in Manila recently put it, "is dead in the water."

The first order of business, Ongpin suggests, is "to get some breathing room." He and Fernandez are now pressing for several hundred million dollars in new loans from the I.M.F. and aid from friendly governments—mainly the United States and Japan—to bolster drained treasury reserves and prime the economic pump. They also seek concessions from the nation's commercial creditors in the form of longer payback periods on outstanding debts.

The I.M.F. will likely insist that the Philippines remain on an austere course. If the government agrees to follow it, budget deficits will remain small (limiting potential increases in social spending), the money supply will remain tight and the peso will lose more of its value. The pragmatists believe that is a generally prudent policy, so the nationalists plan to watch the negotiations closely. The latter believe the I.M.F.'s medicine has been much too harsh, and they do not relish swallowing one more drop. "We should not agree to terms that amount to a further diminution of the standard of living," Diokno said. "If the I.M.F. is unwilling to renegotiate the terms, we should be prepared to go it alone—to repudiate Marcos's debt."

Solita Monsod, an economist chosen by Aquino to head the National Economic Development Authority, has called for the repudiation of some of the $16 billion in debts owed the nation's 483 commercial creditors—specifically, loans made for projects whose costs included bribes for public officials. She has also recommended that future debt payments be limited to a fixed percentage of export earnings. But Fernandez, as head of the Central Bank, has advised against such measures, saying they would alienate creditors, thereby making future loans harder to obtain.

To lessen the impact of austerity and the crushing debt service, Aquino's economic ministers will try to boost government revenues by eliminating loopholes and exemptions in the nation's tariff and tax codes, and improving collection; by streamlining the bloated government bureaucracy; by shedding 150 debt-ridden government-owned corporations; and by recovering some of Marcos's hidden wealth. But the real solution, the ministers suggest, lies in rekindling private investment in the economy.

Ongpin and Concepcion are particularly sanguine about the prospects of agricultural enterprises geared to increase food production for the domestic market, and of small- and medium-scale labor-intensive industrial ventures that would manufacture goods for sale abroad. Their emphasis, however, is on agriculture. If properly directed, they believe, investments in that sector, accompanied by land reform, would put some of the landless, jobless and hungry back to work.

One option Ongpin is considering looks promising. He would encourage the development of community farming units similar to those pioneered successfully elsewhere in East Asia. His model is Indonesia's nucleus estates/smallholder system, under which "satellite" farms of from one to two hectares (2.5 to 5 acres) are established around the perimeter of much larger, highly productive "nucleus" plantations run by the government. In the Philippines that role would be assumed by private investors. Some of the satellites would be subsistence farms; others would be income-generating units, producing nontraditional crops such as soybeans, mushrooms, coffee and nuts for sale in domestic markets. The system would put Ongpin's trickle-down theory to the test: parcels for satellite farms would be deeded to the rural poor under land reform, and entrepreneurial owners of nucleus farms would be expected to offer them seeds, tools, credit and technological know-how at minimal cost. In theory, some of the poor would thus gain stable employment and a chance to put food on their tables, while estate owners would earn profits from their own plantations.

The plan sounds ideal, but many obstacles stand in the way of its implementation. Most important, it's not clear who would invest in the nucleus estates and who among the poor would be eligible to receive satellite farms. In Malaysia, the system is geared to plantation agriculture; in the Philippines, plantations are often run by multinational corporations. If the estate system were to rely on multinational investment it would do little to change the current exploitative nature of large-scale Philippine agriculture. Operators of the satellite farms could be reduced to the status of plantation laborers, growing a considerable portion of their crop, under contract, for paternalistic corporate "benefactors." There is another pitfall. Crop diversification on satellite farms, while an admirable objective, is feasible only once there are reliable markets for nontraditional produce. Those will take years to nurture.

No matter what happens, the Aquino government will have to focus on the most urgent rural tasks: reforming the

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prevailing system of land tenure and dismantling the sugar and coconut monopolies. Effecting those changes alone will be exceedingly difficult. Resistance from still-potent rural "warlords"—large landholders with private armies—can be expected. It also remains to be seen whether large, highly productive farms, such as the vast coconut and pineapple plantations operated by multinationals in Mindanao, would be exempted from land reform. The Philippines depends on those farms to generate exports. Will Aquino follow the Sandinistas' example in Nicaragua, opting to make exceptions in order to promote productivity? If so, she runs the risk of subverting the very purpose of her land reform: redistributing wealth.

Serious doubts have also been expressed about the Ongpin-Concepcion industrial investment scenario. Looking to earn desperately needed foreign exchange, which helps pay foreign debts, the ministers propose encouraging industries that manufacture semiconductors, garments and other export-oriented products. Nationalists point out that such industries shift the focus of production away from the long-neglected domestic market. They also argue that these manufactures are a dead end, with world demand for them low and likely to decline further, given the mood of protectionism in the West. Furthermore, the nationalists note, such industries can't compete in the world market unless they exploit cheap labor. Aquino has promised to elevate the status of workers, granting them the right to organize freely, bargain collectively for higher wages and strike—all of which were limited under Marcos. Will she, like Marcos, renege on the promise to entice investment and promote exports? It's another idealist-versus-pragmatist dilemma.

Aquino must also decide the extent to which foreigners may invest in the nation's economy. The debate is an old one, and it has never been resolved to anyone's satisfaction. In 1984 multinationals accounted for 21 percent of the total revenues of the nation's top 1,000 firms but had 67 percent of their net profits. Idealists and pragmatists agree on the need to restrict profit repatriation, but they differ on the future of foreign investment. Ardent nationalists, including Diokno and Tañada, have called for a phase-out of multinational involvement in the Philippines; Aquino, Ongpin and Vice President Salvador Laurel are among those who believe such a strategy would be tantamount to throwing foreign exchange out the window.

Finally, there is the matter of foreign aid. In the United States there is broad support for a substantial increase in assistance to the Philippines for the coming fiscal year. Many in Congress, including Representative Stephen Solarz of New York, agree with Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger that a large increase in the military component of the aid package is justifiable in light of the continuing N.P.A. insurgency. In the Philippines, however, there is considerable concern about how new military aid would be applied. Using it to fight the insurgents, the left warns, might have disastrous consequences. It all comes back to Aquino's first principle: the insurgency will end only after the rebels' legitimate grievances have been addressed.

The United States can help, but its ability to promote change should not be overestimated. Assistance from the Agency for International Development and the World Bank for programs of agricultural diversification and land reform might have a constructive impact, provided such aid is specifically targeted. Opening the U.S. market to certain Philippine exports—tuna, garments and sugar—might also provide some short-term relief. But Americans must face the stark fact that a growing number of Filipinos don't want, or trust, Uncle Sam to solve their problems.

Surely the United States will offer aid, and the Aquino government will no doubt accept it in one form or another. Nationalists will carefully monitor its disbursal, and so should concerned Americans. Out of respect for Philippine nationalism and in recognition of its own best interests, the United States should make every attempt to insure that the beneficiaries are the 38 million Filipinos who live at or below the poverty line—not the soldiers of Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and Armed Forces chief Fidel Ramos, who so recently were cast in the role of their oppressors. □

LEGAL CORRUPTION

The Real Shame Of New York City

BERNARD D. NOSSITER

When Donald Manes, leader of the Queens Democrats, plunged a kitchen knife into his heart last month, New Yorkers, whose attention span tends to be short, were reminded that their Big Apple is wormy with old-fashioned corruption. A Queens lawyer charged with bribing city officials had accused Manes, a close ally of Mayor Edward Koch, of extorting $36,000 for a small city contract. How much more Manes and other politicians around town have taken awaits the outcome of several rival inquiries by Federal and state prosecutors. Every $100 million that the city awards in noncompetitive contracts is likely to yield $5 million a year in bribes. (Manes and two cronies allegedly carved up precisely 5 percent on one contract after scrupulously laying aside a matching sum for taxes.) That's not as bad as in Lagos, Nigeria, where 20 percent is the going rate.

There is nothing peculiar to New York in this. Kickbacks, shakedowns, the buying and selling of privilege, are the stuff of political life in many cities. The revelations in New York are noteworthy largely because of the egregious Koch, a liberal turned neoconservative who had repeatedly insisted on the unique purity of his administration. Traditional, or Manes-type, corruption captures media attention here, but in size and consequence it is trivial compared with the lawful milking of the city by its

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leading men and their political instruments.

Like many cities, New York is run by a shadowy establishment of wealthy businessmen who use politicians and some union officials to further their pecuniary ambitions. Unlike other towns, which serve a hinterland rich in minerals, fossil fuel or farm produce, New York's natural resources are severely limited. A splendid harbor and land, rocky land at that, are its chief endowments. Inevitably, the exploitation and development of real estate is a major preoccupation of New York's establishment and the principal source of its legal corruption. As Jack Newfield, a senior editor of *The Village Voice*, and Paul de Brul astutely observed in *The Permanent Government*, their study of New York City, "The cornerstone of the permanent government is the Golden Triangle of politics-real estate-banking."

An ever-flowing stream of tax advantages—deductions or exemptions, abatements or credits—pours from City Hall to fuel a speculative building boom. These tax breaks are available to everyone, but not surprisingly a large share flows to the biggest contributors to Koch's campaigns. No one has yet accused Koch of taking a bribe, but as Franz Leichter, a State Senator from Manhattan and one of the handful of legislators concerned with lawful corruption, said recently, "The line between a bribe and a campaign contribution is very thin."

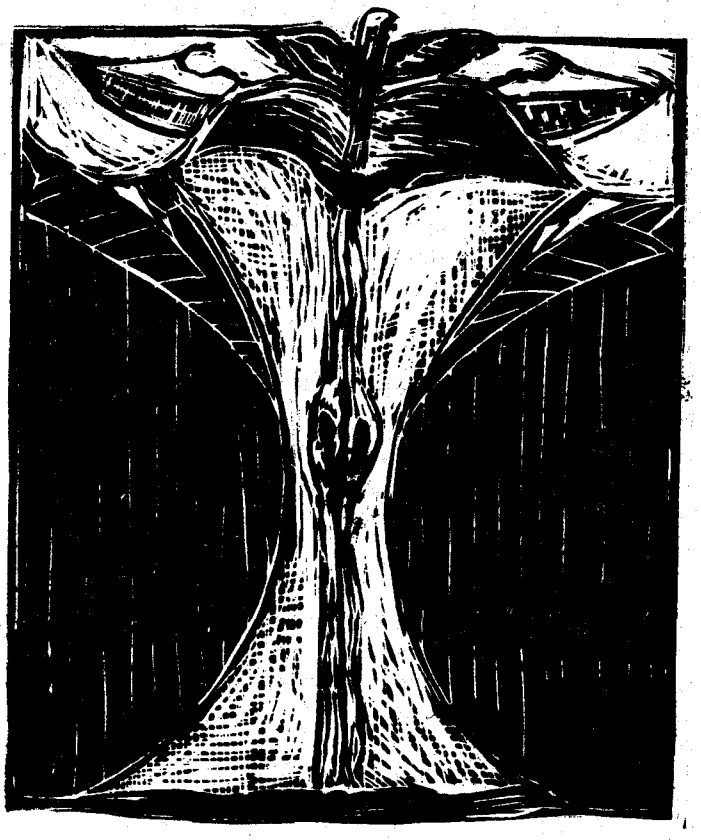
Three programs have been instrumental in enriching developers. One was designed by the State Legislature to rehabilitate slum housing and rooming houses; most of its tax breaks in the city have supported repairs and improvements in expensive Manhattan apartments. A second was created to spur the development of vacant or underused land; its tax privileges have financed high-priced condominium and cooperative apartments. Donald Trump, one of the better-known real estate billionaires, won tax breaks he estimates come to nearly $100 million a year for his Trump Tower, a sixty-one-story condominium and commercial complex in which the average apartment has sold for more than $1 million. Trump won the subsidies by claiming that the building's Fifth Avenue site was underused, although it was occupied by Bonwit Teller, a posh department store. His move was so raw that even the Koch administration tried to stop it. The city's effort failed because Koch had never tried to tighten a loosely drafted law. The third program of tax relief was supposed to create jobs and has been used largely to finance the erection of soul-crushing office buildings that block out the sun.

The three schemes work in much the same fashion. A builder renovates or puts up a structure assured that he will pay either no taxes or only cut-rate taxes on the increased value of his property for ten or more years. The slum rehabilitation program, deployed on Park Avenue as well as Fifth, offers an added feature: the developer is allowed to subtract from his tax bill a large portion of his renovation costs. Under Koch, these devices have reached astonishing levels. Based on my study of available public records, I estimate that in Koch's eight-year reign the three programs have yielded developers $13.9 billion in exemptions, or deductions. Straight tax giveaways, or abatements, have amounted to $300 million. With the real estate tax rate fluctuating at around 9 percent, the exemptions are worth $1.25 billion in lost taxes. That means a total of $1.5 billion in yearly taxes has been forgiven. The largesse will continue at different rates for as long as twenty years.

There are, of course, squalid slums in the neglected wastelands of Brooklyn, the Bronx and Harlem, and a desperate need for new buildings to bring jobs to all those places, as well as to Queens and Staten Island. But those areas do not offer such profitable prospects as Manhattan below Harlem does, so builders or tax privileges do not go there. I estimate that 80 percent of the tax outlays from the three programs have been spent in Manhattan and an overwhelming share of that below the 96th Street line dividing white from black, privilege from poverty.

These are my own estimates because the city is uninterested in making any. My count is constructed from Finance Department records of exemptions and abatements. The city compiles them haphazardly and incompletely; they lie scattered about in dusty office warrens, mislaid by clerks in the Gogolesque depths of the towering Municipal Building. When the city hired a leading accounting firm, Deloitte Haskins and Sells, to determine whether the so-called slum rehabilitation program had been worth the cost in lost revenues, the unhappy accountants replied that the needed information was "either unavailable from public records or unreliable for analysis purposes." The Koch administration, presiding over the world's great communications center, knows what it does not want to know.

The quid pro quo, the campaign contributions, have poured in on an impressive, if necessarily lesser, scale. Precisely how much is given by the developers and the finan-



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cial institutions that put up the money for their ventures is impossible to determine. The contribution reports are pockmarked with gifts from obscure corporations, shells or vehicles for the big-money men. However, substantial individual donations are recorded. Irving and Helen Schneider—he is an executive of Helmsley-Spear, a multibillion-dollar developer—gave an identifiable $102,500 to Koch's campaign last year; Donald Zucker of J & D Realty, $99,121; Peter and other Kalikows, developers all, $88,750. The Trumps were credited with a mere $40,975.

The sums may cause surprise outside New York. Is there no limit on campaign gifts? There is, but it is a blue-sky ceiling. Donors are held to $50,000 for each campaign, but this need not curb anyone. A couple can give a total of $200,000—$50,000 each for both the primary and the general election. With additional donations from cousins, uncles, brothers, aunts and friends, the ceiling virtually disappears. Similarly, corporations are limited to $5,000, but because it can multiply corporate entities, a firm is limited only by its imagination.

"A developer would be so much better off not contributing a nickel," Mayor Koch has said. "I want to tell you, I don't know why they do it." Carol Bellamy, Koch's well-meaning but underfinanced opponent in the 1985 election, supplied an answer. She calculated that twenty-two developers who had given Koch $388,650 just for the primary had received tax breaks worth $444.1 million in the preceding seven years. That works out to $1,143 in tax write-offs for each dollar contributed, a good return even by the generous standards of real estate.

Inadequate as the campaign-funding reports are, they provide an impressionistic picture of the city's ruling establishment. The banks who make money lending to the developers are discreetly represented among Koch's contributors. Chemical Bank was in for $6,500, and Manufacturers Hanover for $5,000. Other financial houses were more freewheeling. Bear, Stearns and its partners put up an identifiable $41,000. Merrill Lynch and its entities were in for $40,500. Some unions were generous. Local 1814 of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union contributed $20,000. So did Local 6 of the Hotel and Restaurant Workers and the International Ladies Garment Workers. Some distinguished individuals, whose forebears were robber barons a century ago, were more prudent. Although C. Douglas Dillon, President Kennedy's Treasury Secretary, gave $12,000, David and Laurance Rockefeller limited their identifiable gifts to $1,000 each.

A mystery greater than the timely suicide of Manes, who, had he lived, might have told officials investigating conventional corruption more than they wanted to hear, is what Koch did with the more than $7 million in contributions. Until the Manes affair broke, in January, Koch was unassailable. Like Robert Moses and Nelson Rockefeller before him, he had used building and the public treasury to erect an invulnerable machine of finance, construction and key union leaders. New York is essentially a one-party state in which Democrats and Republicans usually prefer to divide jobs and money rather than compete for them. The Mayor faced token opposition in the general election, winning his customary 75 percent of the vote. His huge war chest, therefore, serves largely to gratify an outsized vanity and provide handouts to the scores of machine operatives listed as "consultants" on his campaign expenditures report.

Because the lusher reaches of Manhattan are saturated with buildings, Koch has recently diluted or closed down the tax relief programs in the richest neighborhoods. He has, however, left them in force for the Lower East Side, Harlem, the old Hell's Kitchen section and, of course, the outer boroughs, where four-fifths of the city lives and where big developers have not gone in the past but may now find new El Dorados. The untapped sections of Manhattan, always excluding the no-go region of Harlem, could be especially rewarding. Gentrification has begun; ethnic groups like Chinese or working-class Irish and Italians can be driven out; great towers and luxury apartments may rise anew.

While the builders enjoy tax subsidies, their wealthy tenants, private and commercial, have also benefited from lower rentals or condominium prices than they would have paid if taxes had been fully assessed. The tax breaks may cut the rent of a $4,000-a-month apartment by $700. The rest of the city, however, has suffered from this legal corruption. The concentration of building in midtown Manhattan has strained Police and Fire departments and worsened traffic congestion. The forgiven tax revenues mean that subways remain dirty, dangerous and accident-prone. The lost taxes also deprive overcrowded schools of funds and further postpone any serious attack on slums.

Koch dismisses all this. His programs, he claims, have stimulated the construction of office buildings with room for 80,000 workers and created taxable property that will ultimately yield $10 billion over twenty years. His subsidies, he says, have spurred 60,000 units of new housing and they will pay taxes of $4 billion in that same twenty-year span. Koch, though, makes two dubious assumptions. One is that any new building is a social benefit and imposes no costs on the city. The other is that none of the buildings put up with tax subsidies would have taken place without them.

Tax privileges have no doubt generated some building that would not otherwise have been undertaken. But constructing luxury apartments or office towers in Manhattan is usually a profitable enterprise, and builders need no urging to get on with it, only a permit. When the Bank of New York sought a $52 million tax break for a new headquarters on Wall Street, Ruth Messinger, one of the City Council's lonely independents, successfully fought against it. Morgan Guaranty found a home on the lot in a new structure built without a subsidy. It is equally likely that the developer who won a subsidy for a building with $20,000-a-month apartments would have gone ahead even without tax relief.

Prosecutors have begun to announce indictments of the bribers and the officials who took their money. Koch is not likely to be among them, but the spectacle will be entertaining. The real shame of the city, however, lies in the lawful, if suicidal, arrangements that drain New York of tax wealth to enrich a handful of developers and the financial houses that serve them. □

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Bay of Pigs

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

determination to transform Cuba led to radical land reforms and other economic changes that brought him closer to the Cuban Communist Party—which, as late as 1958, had refused to work with him—and put him on a collision course with the Eisenhower Administration. As historian Richard Welch has put it, North Americans discovered, to their amazement, "that the Cuban Revolution was un-American."

When in early 1960 the United States tried to strangle Castro with tough economic sanctions, he turned to the Soviet bloc for help. Eisenhower tightened the choke hold and, in March of that year, secretly ordered the Central Intelligence Agency to plan an invasion of Cuba. U.S. appeals for help in isolating Cuba drew little response from Latin American countries, who feared the Cubans less than Washington's century-old policy of intervention in their affairs. But two dependable friends did volunteer: Guatemalan dictator Gen. Miguel Ydigoras, one in a succession of military leaders who ruled that country after the C.I.A. overthrew the elected reformist government in 1954, and Anastasio Somoza in Nicaragua. Those two men provided training bases in their countries for the Cuban exiles involved in the Bay of Pigs operation. This collaboration is indelibly etched in Central American and Cuban memories.

Campaigning for the presidency in 1960, Kennedy blamed Eisenhower for losing Cuba to the Communists. The accusation trapped the new President. He discovered that the former general, an old hand at plotting covert counter-revolutions, had invasion plans well under way. Kennedy's State Department, however, warned that such an incursion would set back U.S. relations with Latin America and, moreover, probably fail. It quickly became obvious that the C.I.A.'s plans were lacking in intelligence, in both senses of the word. The agency and the Administration said openly that Cuban exiles were going to restore freedom to their homeland, but clearly the C.I.A. was recruiting, training and controlling them. Mutual trust was conspicuously absent. One agent admitted that he refused to tell the exiles when they were to invade because "I don't trust any goddamn Cubans." Propaganda about the exiles made U.S. officials believe that the invasion, carried out by an independently formed anti-Castro force, would cost this country almost nothing. The ultimate responsibility lay with the C.I.A. and Kennedy. Both desperately tried to ignore the operation's central problem—North Americans telling the Cubans how to run their country—by assuming that once the exile force landed, the Cuban people would spontaneously assist in overthrowing Castro.

Harboring serious reservations about the operation, Kennedy decided to cut direct U.S. military support to an ab-

Walter LaFeber teaches history at Cornell University. His most recent book is Inevitable Revolutions: The United States and Central America *(W. W. Norton).*

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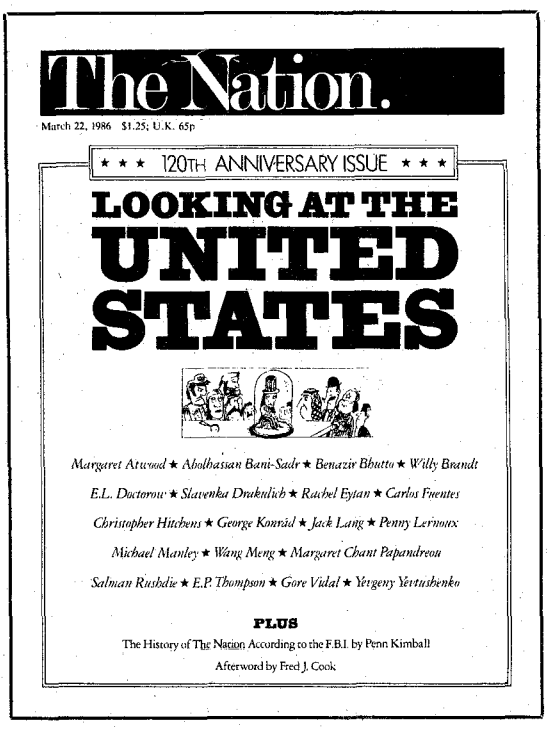
The Nation's 120th Anniversary Issue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solute minimum. Nevertheless, he despised Castro and saw himself going head-to-head with Nikita Khrushchev over which superpower would control the Third World. He was also passionately committed to a romantic view of counter-revolutionary operations and feared being labeled as less of an anti-Communist than Eisenhower, whose policies he had blasted only months earlier. So the attack went ahead on the night of April 17.

It was doomed from the start. In the first place, the C.I.A. mistook the coral reefs in the Bay of Pigs for seaweed. The exile crafts ran aground and were easy targets for Castro's small but effective air force. When U.S. naval officers on an aircraft carrier just offshore urgently requested permission to launch their planes to support the exiles, the White House rejected the request. Robert Kennedy recalled: "We kept asking when the uprisings were going to take place. Dick Bissell [the C.I.A. official in charge of the operation] said it was going to take place during the night. Of course no uprising did take place." Castro killed or captured nearly all the invaders. At a televised press conference Kennedy took full responsibility for the disaster.

Kennedyites have since gone to great lengths to blame the fiasco on the C.I.A. But deeper causes than agency bungling were involved. In the aftermath, U.S. officials tried to fool the public into believing that the exile force was acting on its own and that it was so strongly identified with the cause of freedom that the Cuban people would rally to its banner. Those officials were, and remain, vastly ignorant of both the damage North American control has inflicted on Caribbean and Central American societies and the promise of escape from that past that revolutionaries like Castro seemed to offer.

Moreover, the exiles could never have conquered Castro's army without massive U.S. involvement. That realization led Senator J. William Fulbright, in a last-ditch attempt to stop the invasion, to pose the classic question: What if we win? "Winning" would have meant a U.S. occupation of Cuba and, no doubt, a bloody guerrilla war. U.S. troops in Cuba would have been as unpopular as the Russians are in Afghanistan. In addition, most Americans took seriously the U.S. commitment to the Organization of American States Charter of 1948 not to use force to overthrow Latin American governments. As it was, the invasion violated that pledge. The respect for the rule of law that supposedly distinguishes U.S. foreign policy from that of the Soviet Union was cast aside.

Kennedy's successors have continued to regard the Bay of Pigs tragedy as a failure by the "experts" to run a military operation properly, instead of what it was: a failure to understand the political and economic causes of revolution. By relying on the C.I.A. and the exiles, U.S. officials unwittingly tried to revive the imperialist past. Over the next several years Kennedy's Administration authorized sabotage, dirty tricks and even assassination attempts to eliminate Castro. Those attacks only made the Cuban leader more popular at home and drove him closer to the Russians. Finally, in the aftermath of the debacle, Kennedy resolved to redeem himself by sending more troops to Vietnam. The significant escalation of involvement in Southeast Asia by the end of 1961 was a direct result of Kennedy's misreading of the lessons to be drawn from the Cuban revolution. With the Bay of Pigs invasion Kennedy dealt militarily with the effects, not the causes, of revolution.

Although sympathetic to the Cuban exiles' cause, Harold Feeney demonstrates in the following article that the United States is better at enlisting and exploiting exile forces than in protecting them or dealing with the long-term social and political consequences of their actions. There are troubling parallels between the C.I.A.-created Brigade 2506 in 1961 and the C.I.A.-created *contras* in 1986. As did Kennedy with the Cuban invasion force, Reagan pretends that his Nicaraguan "freedom fighters" are an independent band of dedicated patriots who will stem the tide of communism in the hemisphere at little cost in U.S. lives and treasure. Just as Kennedy raised the specter of "losing" Cuba to Communism, so Reagan depicts the Nicaraguan revolution in stark cold war terms and threatens that legislators who oppose his aid program for the *contras* will be blamed for losing Central America to Moscow. Washington's ignorance of the causes of the "perfect failure" twenty-five years ago, which led to disaster in Vietnam, is now drawing this country into another calamity in Central America. □

THE VETERANS SPEAK

No Regrets—We'd Do It Again

HAROLD FEENEY

It was like surviving the Charge of the Light Brigade. "Someone had blundered," as Tennyson put it. This was Brigade 2506, the Cuban exile force that went ashore at the Bay of Pigs on April 17, twenty-five years ago. In a nightmare of fighting against an overwhelming force, 103 in the ill-equipped brigade were killed and 1,189 were taken prisoner. Four U.S. pilots foresaw a massacre and, disobeying orders, joined with brigade pilots and flew into combat in lumbering old B-26s. They were killed, shot down over the Bay of Pigs by Castro's fighter planes. In an international embarrassment to the United States, the prisoners were paraded before television cameras and the diplomatic corps in Havana. They languished in a Cuban prison until being freed in December 1962, when President Kennedy arranged payment of $53 million in food and medical supplies.

Who were these survivors and what has become of them in the ensuing quarter-century? What happened to the secret

Harold Feeney, commander, U.S. Navy Intelligence, retired, was chief of the Cuba Branch of the Defense Intelligence Agency in 1962 and helped Alexander Haig select former brigade agents for commissions in the U.S. armed forces.

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Politics From A Different Position

PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST
Part I — The First Fantasy

During the two weeks of September 5 and 18, 1978 at Camp David, Maryland, the place known as the Presidential retreat, the Prime Minister of Israel, Menahem Begin, agreed to give away billions of dollars worth of real estate to Egypt. In exchange for those billions of dollars he received a promise, a promise from a man who is now dead, a promise the man could not possibly fulfill alive or dead. The architect of this arrangement was Jimmy Carter, the President of the United States, the man who once tried to convince the Emperor of Japan that the Christian religion was superior to the Shinto religion.

How was it that a politician as worldly and as astute as Begin could be so easily hoodwinked by such ridiculous falderal (tautology intended). One reason was that the wish dictated the thought. Begin was obsessed with and overwhelmed by the wish for peace. Sometimes a strong desire can cloud the thinking processes of even a Begin. The second reason was that the architect of this fantasy was the President of the United States. The President of the United States! Begin, so consistently preoccupied with matters Israeli, lost contact with the realities of U.S. politics, the fact that in our country any native American who is at least thirty-five years of age could become President. The *office* of the Presidency was what overawed Menahem Begin. What he did not know and perhaps later realized, when it was too late, that the macrocosm of Jimmy Carter was the microcosm of Genesis and the four Gospels.

Another error committed by Begin was the belief that Anwar as Sadat represented the will of the Egyptians. Sadat and a few other Egyptians were people of the twentieth century. But the vast majority of Egyptians are first millennium people. It should be obvious to any thinking person that first millennium people and twentieth century people cannot be compatible and agreements made between them would not be worth the paper they were written on.

Of course, the Israelis fulfilled to the letter the commitments Begin made, and as always happens when they give in, were left empty handed. At any rate, Mr. Begin received the Nobel Peace Prize.

The United States wants peace in the Middle East; so do the Arabs; so do the Israelis. What kind of peace? Does the term peace have the same meaning to all three? To the Israelis peace means the ability to carry on one's daily life free from fear of being ambushed and killed. To the Arabs peace means pushing the Israelis into the sea and then occupying their land. To the United States it means less involvement and less money spent. How does one reach agreement on these terms?

Palestine, the land. What and where is it? The Palestinians, who are they? Geographically there is no land called Palestine. If one wishes to go back a few thousand years, we learn from history that the land called Palestine, a word originated with the Greeks, Palaistina, was the land occupied by the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. In the second century B.C. the Romans used the term Syria Palaestina. The term Palestine was revived as an official title when the British took over the land after World War I. Before that the land was part of the Ottoman Empire. The land has been occupied by virtually every power of the Near East. In ancient times the powers were Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, the Greeks under Alexander the Great's successors, then, the Ptolemies, the Seleucids, the Romans, the Byzantines, the Ummayads, the Abbasids, the Fatimids, the crusaders, the Ayyubids, the Mamluks, and then, of course, the Ottoman Turks until World War I when the British took over. At no time in history has there been a nation called Palestine, meaning a political entity with a government, a body of laws, a culture, a history, a language.

The Palestinians, who are they? Are they a

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people as, say, the Chinese, Danes, English, French, Germans, Greeks, Italians, Japanese, Poles, Russians, Syrians, Turks, and on and on? No, they are not. Are they a special people with thousands of years of history and culture as the Jews? No, they are not. Then what are they?

If one wishes to go back to the beginning of history, say, about 10,000 B.C., one could find that the continuous land at the eastern part of the Mediterranean, on the north from the Anatolian Plateau, south to the Sinai Desert and west to the Euphrates River, the land which now includes the states of Israel, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon, one could find nomadic tribes roaming the land, the land which could be the cradle of civilization, the land called by historians as the Syria Palestine land, those ancient tribes, some of them, at least could be the ancestors of those who have lived on that land to modern times. But throughout the history of that land to the present times the peoples written about were Syrians, Mesopotamians, Egyptians, Canaanites, others, but nowhere is there any mention of a people called Palestinians. So who are the Palestinians historically; and what land is theirs?

The Palestinians are Arabs who lived on the land called Palestine and who in 1948 were misled and betrayed by their co-religionists, the Egyptians, the Syrians, the Iraqis, the Jordanians, the Lebanese and by their own so-called leaders, and as a result of that betrayal are now scattered all over, living as refugees in squalor, poverty, misery and in a state of helplessness. Who can help them? PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST Part II — The Second Fantasy addresses the answer.

PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST
Part II — The Second Fantasy
will appear in a subsequent issue.

Sex From A Different Position

CYRUS BASS

If you find **POLITICS FROM A DIFFERENT POSITION** interesting, you will find **SEX FROM A DIFFERENT POSITION** more interesting.

SEX FROM A DIFFERENT POSITION by Cyrus Bass is a most unusual book unique in publishing history. The title is eisegetical. It immediately makes one think of pornography. But the book is everything *except* that. The book is about sex but it is not a sex book by any means. It is a book about human life: the way we think, the way we behave, the way we love and hate, the way we build and destroy and it explains the whys—the whys we love, hate, kill, have wars. The explanations are different from what has been written about human behavior by others. Why then the title? The author wants to demonstrate that when we hear the word sex immediately most of us think of the physical act. But the book is not about sex in the physical sense. The book is literally about sex from a different position.

The author, a practicing clinical psychologist for many years, charts an orientation on how to live in health and happiness which is fundamentally different from what we have been led to believe about sickness and health. His theories about illness in general and about cancer and schizophrenia in particular, if proven to be correct, may well revolutionize the practice of medicine. Dr. Bass is not an eclectic, not a traditionalist. The book is not a compendium of what experts say. There are no footnotes. His writing on medicine, psychology, religion, politics, law, must be read.

The adjacent article which is *not* part of the book illustrates the style and scope of his writings.

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agents trained by the Central Intelligence Agency to operate in Cuba to prepare an underground network prior to the invasion? Who do they think made the "blunder," and what lessons do they feel they have learned?

On a recent trip to Miami, I interviewed twenty of the surviving brigade members. At the time of the invasion they ranged in age from 18 to 40 and were from varied social and economic backgrounds. Most of the secret agents were between 19 and 23 years of age. The C.I.A. had put the latter through a rigorous screening process which included polygraph examinations, high-security-clearance investigations and tests for intelligence and physical ability.

A senior U.S. intelligence officer commented: "I wish the C.I.A. were as exigent in selecting its own agency personnel." Of the eighty-two agents, seventeen were either caught and executed or killed trying to escape. The others managed to make their way back to the United States. In addition to carrying out assigned tasks of espionage and sabotage, they trained many anti-Castro Cubans, who in turn came under C.I.A. control. Many of those local agents were killed when the invasion failed. Some escaped to Florida and, although not official members of the brigade, they are regarded by fellow exiles as heroes. A few of the regular agents and those they trained continued to work for the agency, but after the missile crisis of 1962 their missions to Cuba were limited to intelligence gathering. In 1964 some forty-two brigade members participated in a C.I.A. operation to support then-Congolese President Joseph Kasavubu against a communist incursion from Tanzania. Two brigade pilots were killed during the fighting.

The brigade remained intact in Miami; the 1,800 survivors were stunned by what had happened to them but remained convinced that the U.S. government would soon use them again in a liberation effort. That belief was enhanced when President Kennedy reviewed them at the Orange Bowl on December 30, 1962. Their commander, Dr. Manuel Artime, presented the brigade flag to the President. The stadium cheered wildly when Kennedy promised them he would soon return the flag to them in a "free Havana."

But it was not to be. After the October missile crisis Kennedy promised the Russians he would not intervene in Cuba, and the brigade became a political embarrassment to the President. He asked Joseph Califano, at the time a political adviser on Defense Secretary Robert McNamara's staff, to break up the brigade's leadership. Califano delegated the job to Col. Alexander Haig, who arranged commissions in the U.S. armed forces for more than 150 of them and found good jobs or educational opportunities for others.

About half of those who received commissions were discharged after a few years, but sixty-three of them went on to serve with distinction in Vietnam. Of those, four were killed in action and three wounded. "We could see the irony of fighting what was perceived to be a Communist threat halfway round the world while our nearby homeland was in the iron grip of Fidel Castro," recalled Maj. Modesto Castañer, now retired. "But in our frustration we were eager to fight Communists wherever they might be."

A few of the C.I.A.-trained agents, however, refused to abandon the fight against Castro. They joined independent groups of exiles dedicated to carrying out operations inside Cuba whenever feasible. Without the knowledge of the C.I.A., according to them, they conducted sabotage in Cuba and harassed Cuban diplomats in Mexico and other countries. Those activities created a problem for the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which is charged with enforcing U.S. neutrality laws. The Bureau made a concerted effort to prevent illegal exile activities directed at targets inside as well as outside the United States. As one F.B.I. agent told me, "We were sympathetic to the cause of a free Cuba but could not condone illegal acts." Brigade members did not approve of acts of violent protest in the United States, believing the adverse public reaction would be counterproductive.

With respect to operations outside the country, the C.I.A. had done such a good job of training the agents to work clandestinely that few were intercepted. Néstor (Tony) Izquierdo, head of a Cuban exile group called the National Liberation Front (F.N.L.), learned that one of his colleagues had been jailed in Mexico for activities against the Cuban Embassy. In March 1976, Izquierdo flew to Mexico and, disguised as a police officer, entered the prison and liberated his comrade. During the Nicaraguan revolution he was killed fighting as a volunteer against a rebel group that he identified as a Castro-trained communist faction, leaving a widow and twin sons. To the brigade and the exile community he is a hero and a martyr.

In 1967, Castro's chief lieutenant, Ernesto (Che) Guevara, was in Bolivia exhorting the peasants to revolt. One of the brigade's former agents, who does not wish to be identified, said he paid his own way to Bolivia and volunteered to help Bolivian authorities track down Guevara. The C.I.A. and U.S. military advisers had trained Bolivian troops in counterinsurgency techniques, but, according to David Atlee Phillips, a top C.I.A. official, that was the only official U.S. involvement. A peasant woman revealed the place where Guevara was hiding. Phillips also said the agency wanted Guevara alive, but the Bolivian military insisted on executing him. The former brigade agent, who had talked to Guevara at length, was in the camp when the revolutionary leader was shot.

Robert (Tico) Herrera, one of the anti-Castro exiles who had been trained by brigade agents in Cuba, had also been

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one of Castro's lieutenants. He joined Cuban Representation in Exile (RECE), a group founded by José Bosch Lamarque, then an executive of the Bacardi rum company. Based in Florida, Herrera and a team of ten men made numerous clandestine forays into Cuba, evading Castro's security forces and, on the return trip, the F.B.I. Herrera was killed in an ambush in 1969 in Pinar del Río Province.

Another who continued his activities was Alonso (El Curita) González, a former Protestant minister. He was captured and escaped twice. In a desperate effort to get his wife and child out of Cuba, he learned to fly in Miami and in 1967 piloted a light plane to a remote airstrip in eastern Cuba, where his wife and child waited. But an informer had tipped off the authorities: González was arrested and executed on the spot.

One of the most successful exile groups, known as Comando Mambisi, drew on the expertise of the C.I.A.-trained agents and operated several years after the invasion. In 1964, some of its members sabotaged the Matahambre nickel mines in Pinar del Río. That same year another anti-Castro group, called Comandos L, infiltrated Cuba and exploded a mine against the hull of a Soviet merchant ship in Havana harbor. When one of the group's members, Tony Cuesta, faced certain capture, he attempted to kill himself rather than endanger his fellow agents. Although he exploded a grenade two feet from his head, he lived, losing both eyes and a hand. After spending eighteen years in Castro's harshest prison, he was freed and now resides in Miami.

The story of Brigade 2506 is one of valor in combat and in the lonely business of being a secret agent. "How would you feel if your country was in the hands of a Communist dictatorship and you were on the outside? What chances would you take?" one of the members asked me.

In eastern Cuba just before the invasion, Rodolfo (Sea Fury) Hernández volunteered for an important mission, although he was told his chances of surviving it were only one in ten. He knew he was most familiar with the terrain to be covered. He now works for the U.S. Postal Service in Miami and is a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve. "Yes, I'll be ready if they call me," he told me.

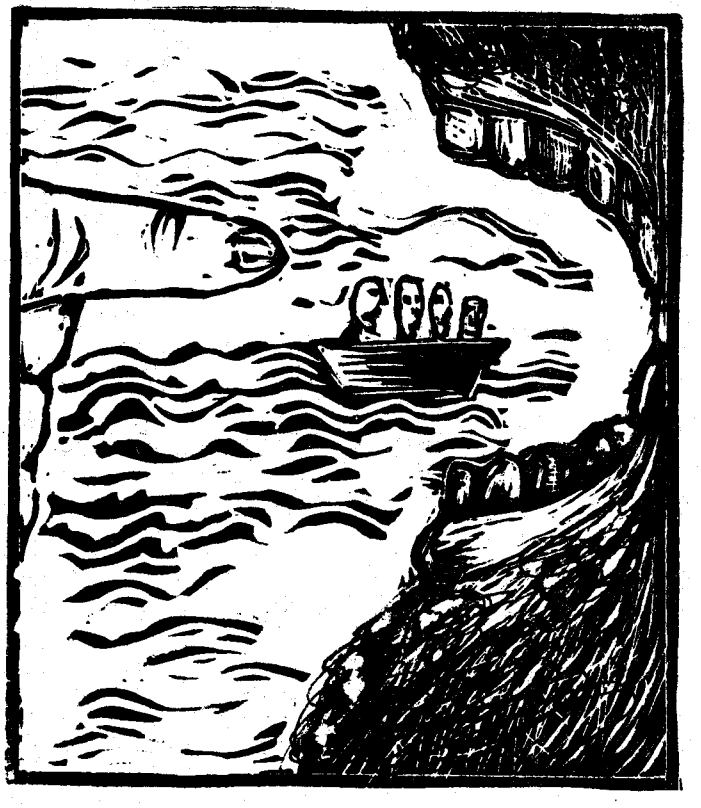
The four pilots who died trying to save the beachhead occupy a special place in the hearts of brigade members, who also feel a bond with other U.S. agents, from the C.I.A. and U.S. Navy Intelligence, who risked their careers and sometimes their lives for the cause. To this day those agents are referred to by their old code names—Pecos Bill, Quixote and Tobacco.

Under the leadership of Miguel M. Álvarez, who became president of the Association of Combatants of the Bay of Pigs in 1978, former brigade members adopted a policy of giving international support to any organization fighting Cuba-directed actions worldwide. A team of six brigade members went to Zaire that year and signed a mutual aid pact with former Angolan President Holden Roberto, now leader of the National Liberation Front of Angola. While there, they carried out psychological warfare to induce some of the 20,000 Cuban troops stationed in Angola to defect. Roberto agreed to help liberate Cuba after achieving victory in his own country. Before they could have any significant success, pressure created by the Clark amendment, which barred military assistance to antigovernment rebels in Angola, put a stop to their activities. The amendment has since been revoked, and the brigade has again begun to aid Angolan rebels. Last September 28, Roberto and brigade leaders met in Miami and renewed their original agreement. On that occasion, the brigade petitioned Representative Claude Pepper of Florida to include Roberto's forces among the beneficiaries of the aid package for Angolan rebel leader Jonas Savimbi now before Congress.

The brigade's help for the *contras* in Nicaragua has been more concrete. Miguel Álvarez led a delegation to Central America last August and met with Enrique Bermúdez, a military leader of the Nicaraguan Democratic Force, and one Comandante Aureliano, an F.D.N. political leader, to coordinate delivery of medical supplies, food and clothing. Aureliano visited Miami last September to take part in fund-raising drives, which netted about $50,000 for supplies.

In Miami former agent José Basulto keeps in touch with *contra* leaders by short-wave radio to coordinate shipments of what he says are nonmilitary supplies. Brigade members told me they purchase the supplies with their own funds and money donated by the Cuban community in Miami.

Gabriel Gómez del Río, a brigade survivor and a retired major in the U.S. Army, served as executive director for Latin American Affairs on the National Defense Council, a nonprofit anticommunist foundation based in Alexandria, Virginia, run by Andy Messing and Representative Robert Dornan, which provides aid to the anti-Sandinista fighters in Nicaragua. Gomez resigned from the group in January and has formed the National Defense Council Agency,



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K.A.L. 007: What the U.S. Knew And When We Knew It

This issue raises serious questions about the U.S. role in the downing of Korean Air Lines Flight 007. Author David Pearson's study argues that U.S. authorities at the highest level knew the airliner was off course much earlier than they have admitted, and that the questions raised by the official versions of the story can only be resolved by a Congressional inquiry. *(August 18/25, 1984)*

K.A.L. 007: Unanswered Questions

This issue brings our 1984 report up to date. With contributions by David Pearson, John Keppel and David Corn, it is the culmination of an intensive investigation. The authors analyze new Japanese radar data, discuss a Nation Institute-sponsored review, by aviation experts, of the final airline transmission and describe the government's efforts to obstruct investigation. *(August 17/24, 1985)*

Central America

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Robert Engler reveals that the dangerous dependence on pesticides and the movement away from people-intensive agriculture results from corporate profit-making strategies. The Bhopal disaster is one of countless poisonings occurring each year, here and in the Third World, under an irresponsible scientific-corporate elite. *(April 27, 1985)*

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which he says does not send aid to the *contras*.

"We see the same tragic thing happening in Nicaragua that happened in Cuba," says Álvarez. "Their revolution has been stolen by Castro and the Soviets. We feel it is our duty to help the Nicaraguans recapture the revolution." Nevertheless, brigade members are worried that the U.S. government might lead the *contras* to believe they have its full support, then abandon them as it did the brigade.

The former secret agents meet at irregular intervals, but each December there is a dinner in Miami for all members from the United States and abroad. At the most recent dinner, Santiago Morales, now 44, who spent eighteen years in a Cuban prison, joined his comrades in an emotional reunion. He had not been executed, he said, "because I was only 18 when I joined the brigade as an agent and looked like a young boy. When I was caught I had been operating alone and they could not relate me to a specific incident."

Most of the brigade members, now middle-aged, have settled down to life in the United States, where they have pursued successful careers, particularly the former agents. They include doctors, lawyers, engineers, a Florida State Representative, a vice president of the World Bank, an Army general, a vice president of Eastern Airlines and a host of successful businessmen. One is chief of President Reagan's bipartisan advisory commission on Radio Martí. They say they are willing to fight again under the right circumstances, but some have reasons different from those they had twenty-five years ago. Captain Eduardo B. Ferrer was one of forty-four pilots and air crew members of Brigade 2506 and a hero of the air battle. Now a senior pilot with Eastern Airlines, he says he would fight again for the cause of liberty for his former homeland, but his life and work would remain in this country. He had flown for Cuba's civil airline, Cubana de Aviación, and is the only commercial pilot ever to hijack his own aircraft to defect from a Soviet-bloc country.

Ferrer, like all the brigade survivors I interviewed, feels no bitterness toward the C.I.A. Debates may continue elsewhere, but for the brigade leaders the blame rests with one man, President John Kennedy. Ferrer says Kennedy made several mistakes, the most egregious being the cancellation of a second planned air strike, which was to have completed the destruction of Castro's military aircraft on the ground. The change in plans allowed Castro's remaining airplanes to sink the invading ships and pin down the beachhead. Kennedy also insisted on a more difficult and dangerous nighttime assault and made an eleventh-hour change in the planned landing site to a much riskier one. Moreover, the President insisted that the C.I.A., rather than the military, direct planning and operations.

Ferrer agrees with Adm. Arleigh Burke, then the head of the U.S. Navy and a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, that cancellation of the air strike was tantamount to a death warrant for the brigade. When the invasion was in its final throes, Admiral Burke begged the President to let him save the effort with a few Navy aircraft from a U.S. carrier that was in sight of the battle. Kennedy refused, saying he did not want the United States to be involved. Burke cried out in frustration, "Goddamn it, we are involved, Mr. President,

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and there is no way we can hide it!" In 1980 Burke told brigade leaders that the invasion taught one not to accept without question orders from a national leader because of being overawed by his position. "We should have questioned his judgment when we saw he was wrong."

Brigade association president Álvarez believes that the United States should not undertake programs that could become half-measures. "Half-measures are worse than none because they nullify other options. I resent the fact that those who did the fighting were not allowed to participate in the planning."

Now brigade members live with a dream tempered by reality. As time passes they realize that their chances of deposing Castro have become remote. Some find this truth painful. José Basulto says: "I am financially successful, with all the worldly possessions I need. Yet I can never be completely happy until Cuba is liberated. We made a tremendous psychological commitment and this has caused a great deal of stress for years." The lesson of the Bay of Pigs, according to Basulto, is that the United States must know what it wants and go for it openly instead of using covert operations. "The C.I.A. was not entirely competent, but they are not to blame. It was the White House. The saddest message I received from the C.I.A. on my radio was the final one on April 17: 'Do not transmit any more. SURVIVE.'"

At almost the same time on the beachhead at Playa Girón, the brigade military commander sent a last emotional message to the C.I.A. base in the United States: "I will not be evacuated. We shall fight to the end. This is where we have to die. We shall never abandon our homeland."

Recently, the brigade built a $250,000 permanent headquarters and museum in Miami. Some of the money came from the city but most of it was donated by members and admirers. The museum will be dedicated on April 17. Former U.N. ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick will give the main address; the Mayor of Miami and several members of Congress will also speak.

Many in the brigade feel that in addition to fighting for their homeland they served as U.S. military forces carrying out the policy of this country. Claude Pepper and Representative Mark Siljander of Michigan, a member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and an adviser to the National Defense Council, have promised to introduce legislation giving the survivors the same benefits U.S. veterans receive.

Three recent events have brought cheer and renewed hope to the brigade members:

§ The invasion of Grenada.

§ President Reagan's declaration of "no more Cubas in the hemisphere."

§ The establishment of Radio Martí, the U.S. Information Agency station broadcasting to Cuba.

But in their heart of hearts they surely know that an invasion of Cuba is not likely to occur. What might have taken only a battalion of marines in 1961 would now require as many as seven divisions and entail immense losses: it would be a Pyrrhic victory. Also, in the absence of a *casus belli*, the dream of overthrowing Castro remains what it was twenty-five years ago—a dream. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Spring Poetry Supplement

from SUMMER OR ITS END

You washed the fruit.
You murdered the bacteria.
On the chair: a watch and a dress.
In the bed: us,
without any of these
and each for the other.
And if it weren't for our names
we would have been completely naked.

It was marvelous, the dream on
the table.
We left the fruit
forever till the next day.
And one of these evenings
I'll have a lot to say about
everything that remains and is kept inside us.

After midnight, when our words began
to influence the world,
I put my hand on your forehead:
your thoughts were smaller than the palm of my hand,
but I knew this was a mistake,
like the mistake of the hand that covers
the sun.

*

Last to dry was the hair.
When we were already far from the sea,
when words and salt, which had merged on us,
separated from one another with a sigh,
and your body no longer showed
signs of a terrible ancientness.
And in vain we had forgotten a few things on the beach,
so that we would have an excuse to return.
We didn't return.

And these days I remember the days
that have your name on them, like a name on a ship
and how we saw through two open doors
one man who was thinking, and how we looked at the clouds
with the ancient gaze we inherited from our fathers
who waited for rain,
and how at night, when the world cooled off,
your body kept its warmth for a long time,
like the sea.

*

Like the imprint of our bodies,
not a sign will remain that we were here.
The world closes behind us,
the sand is smoothed out again.
And already on the calendar there are dates
you will no longer exist in,
already a wind bringing clouds
that won't rain on us.

And your name is on the passenger list of
ships and in the guest books
of hotels whose very names
deaden the heart.

The three languages that I know,
all the colors that I see and dream,
won't help me.

*

If with a bitter mouth you speak
sweet words, the world will not grow sweet
and will not grow bitter.

And it is written in the book that we shall not fear.
And it is written that we too shall change,
like the words,
in the future and in the past,
in the plural and in loneliness.

And soon, in the coming nights,
we will appear, like wandering actors,
each in the other's dream
and in the dreams of strangers whom we didn't know together.

Yehuda Amichai
Translated by Stephen Mitchell

THE STOLEN CHILD

Consider the parents of Joey LeDome,
spirited from the county rink
one night in early spring.
By now he is a gangly kid
who shrugs the nickname *Mooch* he skated off with
into darkness, in knit green pants he's long outgrown
which lie discarded in some trailer park,
where he still lives forever
kept to watch t.v. and eat spaghetti from a can.

We think this, studying our quart of milk,
but know, as the parents always knew,
about the razor and the sack
even those weeks they jumped and lurched
on the first blast for his voice on the wire.

And they carry it off, Mr. and Mrs. LeDome.
At church, before a curb or elevator
she must dimly glimpse—a gesture, shadow
of a spider's web, some swaying
there, the chance that he
will run back down the park slope
wearing the anxious face of his blurred photograph.
Mr. LeDome mows the grass
relentlessly, and turns under
the fallen leaves or blowing snow like someone
just looking for something he has let get away.

Liz Rosenberg

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WATER

What in that world was real?
—Rilke

What was it that troubled
the child I was, so that one night
I walked out in my summer nightgown,
down to the sway and pull of the water,
its murmuring fullness, its calm?
Say it was how a dove,
though I thought it should be sleeping,
cooed in the distance as if from underwater,
as if to be alone and full of longing
were in itself a kind of drowning.
Say it was how when I switched on the light
I saw my room suspended
in the air outside my window, but ghostlier,
and myself like silk or gauze
stitched through with moonlight
adrift between two trees
that seemed to grow right through
the center of that room.
What in the world was real? . . . It multiplied
until sight took place in layers
and the floating room
became a kind of lure.
Say there was a girl
inside my body
who had once lived inside
that half-lit room, that chamber without walls.
In silence I followed her
down to the water.
She said she had no parents
and so she craved the water's body,
how like herself it lay
between two worlds of earth and air;
that it would rock her, take her in.
When I walked back into the house
its fierce solidity seemed a kind of poverty.
That night the water had been warm.
Even as I fell asleep
I knew my other face still drifted there,
my other hands.

Laurie Sheck

CHILDHOOD

Whatever happened seemed ample.
I spent days alone, lying in the yard,
steeping in the cool shade of the house.
I watched a cicada inch out of his skin
and leave it on a tree.
He stared at the glass husk a long time
before flying away.
Evenings, in the deep boredom of summer
I would listen for the cries of peacocks
parading their tails down at the zoo.
When it was too dark to see
Father would whistle me in
using the family signal.

Hearing that music I knew I *was*.

Tom Absher

WAITING

Moments ago something cruel—
one of those empty trains
they send by, some phantom express—
caught me leaning, readying myself.
Now the man next to me turns
up the sound, a big silver radio
on his shoulder, his eyes closed.
He wants it loud and bad
to obliviate some anxiety of his own.
What to do but lecture him
on public versus private, or smash
his radio into little bits of quiet.
But I move away instead, look down
that long stretch of track
for what is overdue, maybe powerless
somewhere, like a messiah.
It's a clear blue day,
not a limit in sight.
I'm late for love, and love is famous
for not waiting well, for conjuring
its enemies after minutes.
The man with the radio
dons earphones, starts to move,
a dancer so solo there's no chance
he could be reached, ever.
Suddenly, a thousand low voices
seem to be saying my name—the train
coming in like something once desired,
now too late to save the day
. . . and no one visible to blame.

Stephen Dunn

OF THREE OR FOUR IN A ROOM

Of three or four in a room
there is always one who stands beside the window.
He must see the evil among thorns
and the fires on the hill.
And how people who went out of their houses whole
are given back in the evening like small change.

Of three or four in a room
there is always one who stands beside the window,
his dark hair above his thoughts.
Behind him, words.
And in front of him, voices wandering without a knapsack,
hearts without provisions, prophecies without water,
large stones that have been returned
and stay sealed, like letters that have no
address and no one to receive them.

Yehuda Amichai
Translated by Stephen Mitchell

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FILMS.

ANDREW KOPKIND

My Beautiful Laundrette

Colonialism and its discontents could become the central epic of British life in the next period, just as social class and its contradictions have dominated the insular imagination of generations past. Of course the two epics intertwine and overlap. Empire and hierarchy go together as bubble goes with squeak, as pomp goes with circumstance, as the organization of Britain's colonial system correlated precisely with the structure of its domestic society. Not surprisingly, emphasis began to shift from the consequences of class to the complications of a dying colonialism as the sun set on the Empire and flocks of imperial pigeons came fluttering back to Britain to roost. Suddenly race and caste became pressing issues in everyday life. Themes of cultural assimilation, national identity and ethnic domination—largely unexamined by the British conscience in the home islands, outside the familial context of Anglo-Celtic relations—replaced or merged with the old motifs of social mobility and privilege.

Bringing the colonial wars home has had a salutary effect on British culture, and I don't mean merely reggae music and tandoori chicken. The widening pool of available visions, emotions, habits and ideologies has fed what was beginning to look like a veritable Sahel of sensibility, with nought but nostalgia and wrinkled self-pity to decorate the arid landscape. And if *My Beautiful Laundrette* is any indication, more rains are on the way. Seemingly slight, inconclusive, even mischievous, it is a movie that opens arguments, suggests possibilities, throws out ideas and plays with characters in a way that marks the start of a style, rather than the end of an era. It's fresh in the many senses of the word.

Written and conceived by Hanif Kureishi—an Anglo-Pakistani born in Britain—and directed by Stephen Frears, *My Beautiful Laundrette* focuses on a detail of London's demography, the neighborhoods where first- and second-generation Indo-Pakistani immigrants are digging into British life. There's a reverse archeological element in the scene: the natives have come to the motherland to search for artifacts of the supposedly superior culture and make sense of the system that colonized them. And to dominate that system too; not since Bosworth Field has a horde from over the seas threatened to loosen British social hegemony and upset the status quo.

Kureishi produces an extended family that is neither entirely happy nor miserable, certainly not noble, but not unusually villainous either. There's Papa (Roshan Seth), who vegetates in a vodka-induced state some distance from the suffocating theocracy of his homeland and equally far from the pressures of the striving immigrant community of his exile. His son, Omar (Gordon Warnecke), is bent on making it in bourgeois Britain as a charming manipulator of lovers, relatives and small-business deals. Uncle Nasser (Saeed Jaffrey) is the paunchy paterfamilias with an Anglo mistress on the side and a talent for capital accumulation and cultural assimilation: "I'm not a professional Pakistani, I'm a professional businessman," he boasts. More faces in their crowd belong to a drug smuggler, a sexually liberated daughter, a coven of homebound matrons and macho hangers-on, and various family fillers. Just what you'd expect: it's a group that contains in average proportion the predictable number of deadbeats, social climbers, hypocrites, romantics, waifs, naïfs, self-deluders, failed heroes and wounded warriors. What is unusual is not their wounds or delusions, but the way those are refracted by the intense historical experience of living in Margaret Thatcher's England.

A certain amount of Paki-bashing is inevitable, but Kureishi stands even that conflict on its head. Johnny (Daniel Day Lewis), a punky baby Nazi, is Omar's old school chum, and the attraction between the two of them roughly resembles the relationship between the colonial immigrants and their former masters. It is erotic, manipulative, dangerous, unstable but continually compelling. Uncle Nasser agrees to give Omar a seedy laundrette to run, and the boy takes Johnny on as a kind of partner and servant to build up the business. Things are helped immeasurably when the lads appropriate the proceeds of a cocaine deal to refurbish the premises, which then become a pastel palace and trendy hangout called Powders.

In the meantime, Omar and Johnny are amusing themselves with a sexual affair that is part puppy love, part S & M. Aside from the fact that it is a same-sex relationship, it is no more extraordinary than the liaison between Uncle Nasser and his mistress, Rachel (Shirley Anne Field), or the engagement encouraged by the family for Omar and his sexy cousin Tania (Rita Wolf). Audiences may be baffled by the presentation of a gay relationship that is not a problem or an issue; the critic Vito Russo reported that he heard a woman at a screening ask her companion, "I don't get it. Why were they gay?" But there is no point other than the perfectly adequate explanation that it is the way things are, that some people are Pakistanis in London today, that some lovers are men, that some uncles have mistresses. The best thing about *My Beautiful Laundrette* is that it makes no small moral judgments, casts no stones of self-righteousness nor draws portentous generalizations. It is not a European movie about Asians or a straight movie about gays; more strikingly, it is not a movie of special pleading by one group or tendency or subculture for its own cause.

If that is baffling, it's because so few films have been able to make a slice of life seem true without relying on the clichés and stereotypes society imposes on it. Two very different films I've written about recently failed precisely because they were unable to develop a point of view unique to their material. *Parting Glances* was shot from deep inside the confines of New York's Upper West Side gay ghetto, but it adopted the definition of that small circle of friends from the world around it. *The Color Purple* drew beautiful and powerful cartoons of Southern black people in a bygone era, from designs that were approved by sophisticated urban white people today. Both those movies contained truths, but in a larger sense were not true; they lacked the integrity and the self-definition that *My Beautiful Laundrette* so wonderfully conveys.

Nothing is resolved in this movie, no determination is made about the success of the immigrant colonization of Britain, or the future of Omar's relationship with Johnny. The bashers come back, love falters and flares. Papa is sober and soused, business booms and busts. All that is predictable, but never dreary, thanks to Kureishi's honest insights and Frears's oblique and original vision. Life, once again, is redeemed by paradox, and Britain may yet be saved by innovation. □

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ART.

ARTHUR C. DANTO

Richard Serra

The dominating link of historical explanation that recommends itself to art historians is that of influence; no doubt this is so because influence defines that posture of expert appreciation known as connoisseurship, which consists in seeing in the works of X the signs and traces of Y, naturally invisible to the layman. But the dense network of historical causation has many subterranean passageways, and the Museum of Modern Art's overlapping exhibitions of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (until April 15) and Richard Serra (until May 13) provide a good example of a historical link invisible to connoisseurship. They connect the two artists through the materials of their respective projects, and the differential esthetics of oxidation.

Cor-Ten steel has become an emblem of Serra's sculptural persona; it is, for example, what his most notorious work, *Tilted Arc*, is made of. As a so-called weathering steel, Cor-Ten has become the standard material for a certain genre of outdoor sculpture, for reasons the moody commuter might appreciate as he or she inches past the parking garage at La Guardia Airport and casts a grateful eye on the rich, chocolaty coloration of its exposed posts and girders. Cor-Ten was designed to weather graciously, to use the processes of rust against itself, transforming that sign of decay and neglect into something rich and strange. It needs no painting, is self-maintaining, and the rate at which it oxidizes, growing more beautiful as it does so, is fractionally slower than that of ordinary steel. It is a triumph of metallurgy, and it was the steel industry's brilliant response to the exorbitant cost of bronze cladding, of which Mies made such extravagant use in the Seagram Building. That breathless masterpiece, which was to define urban architecture through the succeeding decades, was also far too expensive to emulate. The trick was to find a material that would, at a distance, look just like the bronze of the Seagram Building but be within the budget of your ordinary steel-and-glass box in Hamtramck or Des Moines. And Cor-Ten steel was the elegant answer to that esthetic-economic prayer.

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So Mies and Serra, museum mates for the moment, are dialectically connected through the material substance in which their work was realized. It is interesting to ponder differences in their response to Cor-Ten's singularities. Mies had a weakness for austere opulence, and a philosophy of material integrity. My one encounter with him was at the Farnsworth House, built in 1945, which a pal of mine, a student of Mies's, drove me out to see. I was curious that he had used travertine marble for the floor of that glass-and-steel country retreat which Dr. Farnsworth, to her sorrow, had commissioned him to design. Well, I recall Mies saying, what is it but four walls and a roof? It's got to have *something* extra. A man who insists on travertine marble for a weekend house is unlikely to consider using rusted steel because it is cheaper than bronze cladding: it would be like suggesting artificial marbleizing, or formica. On the other hand, there is a certain aggressiveness to Serra's sculptural approach that suggests to me that Cor-Ten's propensity to bronzify in six or seven years would not be a recommendation. Nor do I recall as an argument in the controversy over *Tilted Arc* that at some point in its eternal tenure at Federal Plaza it would be transfigured by the elements into a thing of beauty. The usual thought was that with time and education we would come to appreciate *Tilted Arc* more and more for its uncompromising esthetic, not that it would meet us halfway by turning into something gratifying to an esthetic it set out to challenge.

Ashes, dust, moths and rust have, since biblical times, been natural symbols of the decay of earthly things, and rust most particularly afflicts those items of daily life that embody our deepest sense of adequacy and prosperity. The rusted horseshoe, like the rusting truck chassis, connotes immobility and breakdown and loss, the rusting saw or rusted plow communicates disuse and abandonment. It is difficult to abstract from so iconographically reduced an object as *Tilted Arc* its most conspicuous material property and treat its rustiness as invisible. And because rust carries so negative a symbolic charge in our culture, that, in conjunction with the ordinarily positive symbolic charge still carried by the concept of high art, raised the esthetic offensiveness of *Tilted Arc* to a higher power. It was rust that counted against Serra's *Terminal*, a work erected in Bochum, West Germany, in the heart of the country's steel-producing area, and also made of Cor-Ten. *Terminal* "is already rusted and disgusting in appearance," said those who made it an issue in the political campaign of 1979. Would an object of comparable size but made of travertine, buttery and soft and palpably luxurious, have elicited such a violent response? Perceived as adding to the injuries of inconvenience the symbolic insult of rust, *Tilted Arc* had to arouse a certain pitched antagonism. On one of my visits to its site, blackened snow lay in awful piles against its scaling face. When first exposed, there is little to distinguish Cor-Ten from ordinary industrial steel. It may not have mattered much at the La Guardia parking facility, where the assumption was that sooner or later they would get round to painting it, thus giving the metal the time necessary to acquire its marvelous patina. But it mattered at Federal Plaza, when that vast ferrous curve appeared from an alien cultural space to agonize its unhappy crossers.

The final switchback in this ironic chronicle is this: in the chaste white galleries of MoMA, the cultural space in which they belong as art, the rusted sculptures look as beautiful as they were intended to look outdoors but seldom do, I think, because of their proximity to the unavoidable flotsam of urban life with which rust symbolically belongs. I was struck by the subtle shifts or gradations of metallic texture and coloration, which reflected here red, there blue, or displayed a shower of golden spots. Wandering rivers of black or deep purple articulated the richly varied tonalities of the rusted steel, in which one could mark out the rude numbers that must have served some identifying function in the steelyard. One scarcely saw it as rust, and in a curious way the surfaces seemed as oddly elegant as those of travertine marble; one might even suppose that Mies, a model of whose Farnsworth House may be admired on the subjacent level of the museum, could have been educated to appreciate Cor-Ten in its intended state of metamorphosis. Whether their esthetic appeal, on the other hand, is at all integral to Serra's pieces—or instead a distraction from the demanded response—can hardly be discussed in isolation from his sculptural intentions.

In earlier discussions of *Tilted Arc*, I expressed considerable regard for its sculptural qualities while voicing severe reservations about its suitability to public space. Now we have an opportunity to come to terms with Serra's pieces in the sheltering atmosphere of a museum show, in their own space, as it were, rather than as claimants to rights in public space because of their being art. My immediate thought is that visual pleasure is somehow too disincarnate to be greatly relevant to the meaning of the eleven works that make up this show. And in a way, the arrest by beauty must, if I understand these works at all, constitute a subversion of their intention. One used to speak of walking around a piece of sculpture, viewing it from different angles and under different aspects. But that implies that one's relationship to sculpture remains essentially visual. As such, the specific material properties of sculpture, as of painting, should matter little; recognizing them is but a concession to the material conditions of art itself, which properly refer us to a realm of imagination. We are not meant to see the bronze or marble any more than to see the pigment of the Sabine women of Poussin; ancient theories even held that an actual personage was imprisoned in an alien substance, which Pygmalion might kiss away, restoring her to her displaced reality.

I suppose a fair amount of modern art can be understood as a rematerialization of art, with a certain kind of abstraction as a means to that. With Serra, we are conscious, always, of material as material, so rust is a declaration of steel as steel. But this recognition, while central to our experience, remains too distant and cognitive to connect us vitally to the sculpture. Knowing it to be made of metal—steel or lead—or that it has this shape or that is once more too disincarnate a relation to the work. My sense is that the sculpture must seek to incarnate the viewer, to make the viewer conscious of his or her own embodiment as flesh, so that one's encounter with it, as in sex or combat, is as body to body.

There is a transition, magnificently described by Sartre and central to his philosophy, where consciousness, up to then simply flooded by the objects of which it is aware but never a part, becomes aware of itself as embodied, as an object in its own right and part of the world rather than logically outside it. In a sense, that is what Serra undertakes to achieve in his characteristic works, not so much as an end but as a means of releasing latent structures and forces that will be accessible only to the spec-

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tator who has been transformed into a participant.

One way to achieve this, and a way that is congruent with the personal style of this artist, is to make the visitor simultaneously aware of a danger in the work and the vulnerability of his or her own body. The work must be perceived not simply as heavy but as *crushingly* heavy. It is striking, for example, that several of the pieces are roped off (as was Serra's piece in the recent Guggenheim exhibition), not to protect the work, which is patently immune to the sprays and slashes of the vandal, but to protect the visitor. These pieces are typically composed of lead or steel plates propped against one another, or balanced on one another's edges and buttressed by a wall. Heaviness acts against heaviness to create a certain lightness—much in the manner, according to famous philosophical example, that by pressing downward the keystone stays up and brings about the verticality it struggles against. At any moment, however, like a house of cards (which is the subtitle of one of the roped-off pieces), the sculpture could come crashing to the floor, flattening the viewer who may have taken the imperatives of participation too literally. Push can quickly come to shove in Serra's work, and the ropes do not so much thrust us back into our ocular identity as remind us of the fragility of bone and flesh, for which the precariousness of balanced and propped plates is at once a metaphor and a threat.

The modality of direct or implied physical interaction runs from the ponderously playful to the menacingly confrontational. An example of the first is *Two Corner Curve* (a near cousin to *Tilted Arc*), a curved wall ten feet high which runs from one corner to the diagonally opposite corner of a room, thus transforming itself by architectural circumstance into an obstacle. One can circumnavigate *Tilted Arc* or even, if athletic enough and equipped with rubber soles and a good start, climb over it, but *Two Corner Curve* is too high to scale (if the guards would allow so enthusiastic a participation), and, revealing its space as usable by refusing to allow us to use it, forms a steel grin from ear to ear at our frustrations. I headed toward the far corner, only to realize that I would have to see the other side, if indeed it were visible, through some intervening exhibits. One of these, *Delineator II* (1974-86), consists of two plates of one-inch steel, each 10 feet by

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20 feet, which form a cross—but the top plate is attached to the ceiling while the bottom plate is on the floor. Of *Delineator*, Serra wrote:

> The juxtaposition of the steel plates forming this open cross generates a volume of space which has an inside and an outside, openings and directions, aboves, belows, rights, lefts—co-ordinates to your body that you understand when you walk through it. . . . You sense a volume of verticality lifting up from the floor to the ceiling that you become part of.

Everyone I saw walked around it, chiefly in order *not* to become part of it. The spontaneous response was to skirt the damoclean plate, hugging the walls with nervous glances upward: one senses a volume of verticality crushing downward, as in a press. One gets a wonderful sense of the reciprocal geometry of straight and curved, the material polarities of wood and steel, when one sticks one's head through the lethal space of the guillotine, but I know relatively few for whom even the remote risk is worth it. It is with a marked sense of relief that one enters the other half of the room *Two Corner Curve*, like an iron conquistador, has claimed as its own in the name of art.

Serra's work is at the intersection of traditional sculpture and what I have elsewhere designated the art of disturbation. Disturbational art is not simply disturbing, like the images of Leon Golub or, latterly, Eric Fischl—or like the skinning alive of Marsyas in the Titian masterpiece which sets so many of us shivering these days. In all these cases, the fact that the work is art interposes itself between us and the disturbing reality. In disturbational art, a work's being art is rather an impediment that the artist seeks to dissolve or remove, bringing the disturbing realities into our own lives, making its implied dangers real. Happenings were mildly disturbational in this sense, seeking to invoke a dramatic alteration of reality. And disturbation has roots that go back to the very beginnings of art, where the artist aspired to a kind of magic, in which, for example, a god might descend into what began as a mere theatrical presentation. Serra is set apart from the sculptural genre to which he has otherwise conributed so powerfully through the ingredient dangers, the jostlings and implied aggressiveness, of his difficult pieces, even though his own remarks on participation make it sound as if little more were involved than an

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enhanced appreciation of space and matter. He is unlikely to weather gracefully, like Cor-Ten steel, and it would be a shame if he did. There is a sector of artistic experience that he dominates and keeps from becoming frivolous; he is engaged in returning us to artistic forces the centuries have succeeded in repressing.

I recommend the catalogue highly. It contains essays by Rosalind Krauss and Douglas Crimp, which harmonize with each other as little as either harmonizes with this essay. Krauss's is phenomenological; Crimp's is Marxist. That three such contrary interpretations can be given of a single sculptor is a measure of his depth and at the same time a testimony to the nature and limits of art criticism itself. □

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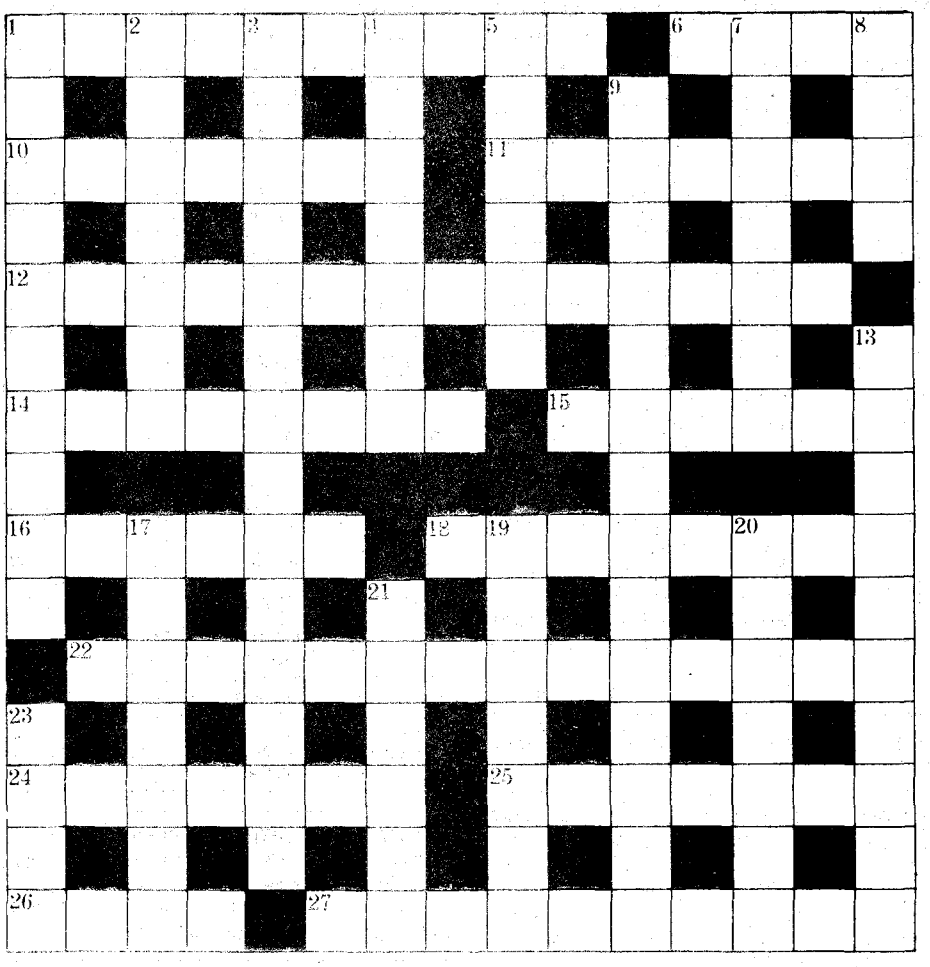
Crossword Puzzle No. 2099

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 See 22
6 With or without a cap, has a strong potential. (4)
10 What the editor does with Communistic behavior. (7)
11 Time for Othello to get docked here? (7)
12 Is the rest in the crib if you do? (5,4,1,4)
14 A representative of them, being content with the magazine, perhaps. (8)
15 Where the ore is refined, and something might be affixed. (6)
16 It might have a stirring effect if one does, in mention of it. (6)
18 You can make better time this way with a crew, possibly. (8)
22 and 1 across A question of time which is not well done? (4,2,2,4,2,1,3,2,4)
24 Stick in the most essential part, and things get rusty if they do. (7)
25 Certainly not on the inside track, to make it brief! (7)
26 With 6, a sort of seat belt could be made, by examination. (4)
27 You might not be bothered with it, when sold in sets, possibly. (10)

DOWN

1 Pertaining to the craft of aircraft, it's a race to make it! (10)
2 Being part of the hearing group, relative, when about to fade. (7)
3 An unfit state implying orders in your hat? (14)
4 Merely what is hard and cold in moral principle. (7)
5 See 8
7 Responsible for the blindness of a man in our town? (One needs something other than a first class designation to travel around on.) (7)
8 and 5 Still less sensitive, like 2, for example. (4,6)
9 The organization of the bar used to be led by suit, perhaps. (6,8)
13 Versifiers who like to sample American short story now and then? (10)
17 Sticks at this place in the island? (7)
19 Might one be both wise and disapproving? (4,3)
20 "Shimmy," as the flapper said. (The classic hem is expected to show it.) (7)
21 Does it imply a slight hint of a rise, like a little bit of money? (6)
23 Payment which might show cost. (4)

PUZZLED?

No more cross words. Find out why "little skipper" is a "truant." Send for a free copy of Frank W. Lewis's Ground Rules to *The Nation*, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.

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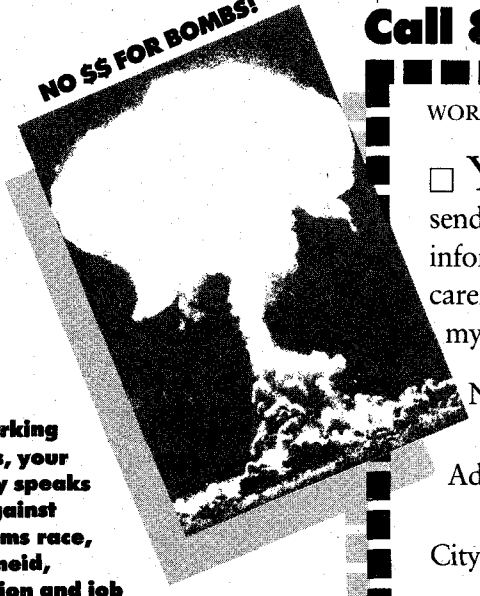

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[1] *Forbes*, September 16, 1985. (General category.)
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